SAT SPECIAL / A2-1
New movies boost Filipino films' happiness quotient

WORLD / A22
Israel pounds Lebanon as world urges restraint

NEWS / A2
Magdalo 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan renounces military rebels, admits talks with Reds

SUPER / E1
Exclusives with Johnny Depp, Keira Knightly and Orlando Bloom

Midas touch: Bacteria can turn dust to gold

SYDNEY—RESEARCHERS in Australia have uncovered evidence that a tiny microbe may have the Midas touch of Greek legend, capable of turning dust to gold.

Findings reported in the July 14 issue of the

MIDAS A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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OFWs' $ remittances jumped by 30% in May

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOLLARS SENT HOME BY OVERSEAS FILIPINO workers surged by 30 percent to $1.14 billion in May, its highest monthly growth level since June last year, in time for the payment of the tuition of their dependents, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

This brought total remittances in the first five

NEWS A6

'Bolante case very rare'

Dipolog bishop says Palace tried 'to buy us'

By Christian V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

A SENIOR ROMAN CATHOLIC prelate yesterday said he personally experienced an attempt by a Malacañang staff member to buy off bishops on the eve of their meeting last week to discuss the impeachment issue against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"They were trying to bribe the bishops ... Corrupt (Shameless)," Dipolog Bishop Jose Manguiran told the Inquirer, recounting an incident when he said the staffer slipped two cash-filled envelopes into his hotel at the Pope Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila.

The 60-year-old prelate later estimated to another bishop that the envelopes each contained P15,000 in cash, which Manguiran returned.

Manguiran said the incident occurred on Monday last week before the members of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines closed themselves for a weeklong retreat and meeting, which ended with a pastoral statement withholding support for current moves to impeach Mrs. Arroyo on charges ranging from corruption to election fraud.

Malacañang denied any bribery attempt had occurred.

CBCP vice president Archbishop Antonio Ledesma said he had also been offered an envelope but this occurred on a separate occasion and he didn't attach much

DIPOLOG A4

USED EXCLUSIVELY FOR FOREIGNERS who have violated US immigration laws, Bolante's pals inside this compound located in the suburbs of Los Angeles, is heavily guarded and visitors are carefully screened. And they have to observe a dress code: For females, shirts, dresses and slits should not go beyond mid-thigh when seated; for males and females, no short/jogging shorts. Bolante himself is required to wear a scrub-like prisoner's uniform.

Oil price nears $80 on Nigeria, Mideast fears

NEW YORK—OIL PRICES SURGED to a record high of over $78 a barrel yesterday on renewed worries over supply from major exporters Nigeria and as conflict between Israel and Lebanon heightened transmission tensions.

In Manila, however, business leaders generally took the record surge in oil price in stride, with one trader saying it was more or less seasonal and that Filipino businessmen used to price shocks.

Francis Chua, president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said business operations as well as consumers were already used to the upward trend since prices breached the $30-a-barrel level a few years ago.

"We have experienced this before and most of the price adjustments for commodities have been made. Prices of goods have tripled or quadrupled over the period," Chua said.

Also bolstering prices, the Iran nuclear dispute headed back to the United Nations Security Council, North Korea walked out of talks with South Korea and crude inventories fell more than expected in the United States, the world's top oil consumer.

"Geopolitical tensions have stepped up—we are moving on to a new phase in Iran and Israel," said Mike Wirtanz of investment

BUSINESS A17

DFA knew of arrest in US from Day One

By Marlo U. Rueda
Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—THE Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila apparently knew about the July 7 arrest of former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante from Day One but kept it under wraps for almost a week.

Mike Flemming, spokesperson for the US Customs and Border Protection, which detained Bolante upon his arrival at the Los Angeles International Airport on July 7, said the ex-agriculture official was stopped as he went through passport control for "secondary inspection."

At that point, Flemming said, it was discovered that Bolante's US visa had been revoked by the US Embassy in Manila. Bolante was detained for questioning and turned over to the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, he said.

Flemming said that on the same day, the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles was informed about Bolante's arrest. Asked how the information was relayed, he said: "We sent them a fax, and we also spoke to them on the phone."

One of the top immigration specialists in Los Angeles described the cancellation of Bolante's visa as "a very rare case."

"This is the first time I've heard of such a case in my 26 years in the field of immigration," Gail Thackeray said, adding that it

BOLANTE A4

'Nicole's' 'cross' done in 40 minutes

By Volt Contreras and Tarra V. Quismundo

THE EXPECTED FIREWORKS AT the cross-examination of the Filipino complainant in the Subic rape case did not happen.

Days before the main event, "Nicole" was warned by her lawyers to "expect no kindness" from the defense. But yesterday, only one of the Filipino lawyers of the four accused US Marines confronted the cross-examination and was done in 40 minutes, provoking some of the tears and angry outbursts that earlier marked her testimony.

Speaking later with reporters, the lawyers of the three other American soldiers said they chose not to grill Nicole because she did not mention their respective clients anyway during her emotional, three-day direct examination.

Those who adopted the "no cross" tactic were Francisco Rodrigo, counsel for S/Sgt. Chad Carpenter; Jose Justiniano, for Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood; and Roland Oyshaca, for Lance Cpl. Dominic Duplessis.

"The most eloquent cross-examination is no cross-examination," Rodrigo said.

Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon adjourned the proceedings at 2:10 p.m.—the shortest hearing yet in the trial.

NICOLE'S A17

SURPRISING. Nicole's lawyer describes the brief grilling of her client.

US Embassy, DFA mum on Bolante

By Nikko Dizon and Philip C. Tubeza

THE US EMBASSY IN MANILA yesterday neither confirmed nor denied that it was behind the cancellation of Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante's US visa.

Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lusenthop told the Inquirer that he did not know the US Customs and Border Protection official in Los Angeles who said it was the US Embassy in Manila that had revoked the B1/B2 visa. (See story on this page.)

"I don't know what Mike Flemming is said. I have yet to see your report. But whatever your correspondent has been told by Mr. Flemming, it's a long standing practice of the US Embassy that we don't comment on individual cases of visa issuances, denials or cancellations," Lusenthop said in a phone interview.

US EMBASSY A4

3 Pinoy kids are world jr. golf champs

SUCCESS HAS MANY PARENTS. (At left) Mia with her dad Col. Norman Legaspi; (above left) Cyen Rodriguez with mom Cherry; (above right) Dottie with her dad Ed Arellea. They were all photographed at the scene of their triumph in San Diego, California.

By Jong Arcano
Editor, Inquirer Golf Monthly

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA—DOTtie Arellea used her borrowed clubs to perfection, Cyna Rodriguez made one late unforgettable tee shot, and Mia Legaspi showed such brave heart in giving the Philippines an unprecedented three victories in the Callaway Junior World Golf Championships here Thursday.

Arellea showcased the continuing transformation of a raper talent with an eight-shot lead of the Class C field, Rodriguez traded the 17th tee win the Class B crown by just a stroke and Legaspi contributed a surprise win of her own in a Class E bracket where she was not given a chance against tall-fat, farther-and older rivals.

And 28 years after the world first came to know about Philippine junior golf with the twin victories of now-professionals Ramon Rubio and Cantin Villamor, then for two years in 1981 and 1985, the Philippines came off with its most productive campaign ever at the annual event.

With three of the 14 disputed titles so far, the Philippines also stands to become the strongest foreign contingent outside of host United States, which has captured four pending Friday's completion of play in the 15-17 class.

PINOY KIDS A6

WEATHER FORECAST

PERSIST Tropical Storm Ineng is not expected to affect any area of the country in the next three days, although it may enhance the southwest monsoon. The rest of the country will generally experience partly cloudy skies with isolated rains. [illegible]

Second FRONTPAGE

Happy, sad stories for 2 Baguio families

BAGUIO CITY—TWO SETS OF parents have been ordered to travel to La Union on Thursday night hoping to find their missing daughters alive.

But only the family of Grace Princess Arguso was given the good news.

Arguso is a grade school pupil of Rizal Elementary School here, who didn't come home after class on Tuesday. Yesterday, she was found alive at Barangay Bato, according to reports from the Office of Civil Defense.

It was the family of 7-year-old Gerard Bersits of Imelda Village that teamed up along the banks of Bauang, La Union, 47 km from here.

Bersits had been declared missing when she fell into a creek on Tuesday in typhoon "Florita's" strong wind and wind hit the city.

A child child, 4-year old Orlen Ballesteros Jr., was still missing after a landslide buried his family's house on Tuesday.

Reports yesterday recorded 40 more fatalities in typhoon-related incidents in Baguio, Ilocos Sur and Zambales. This brought the death toll to 89 in the Northern and Central Luzon.

Most of the casualties were drowning victims and those buried alive by landslides," said Oliver Rabonza, executive director of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, adding that more than 50,000 people were affected by the storm.

Fifteen people were injured and seven were still missing.

Typhoon Florita left dozens of minor landslides and caused flooding in Luzon, Rabonza said.

Damage to property and agriculture appeared to be minimal in the city as it hit the northeastern coast of Luzon on Sunday but many parts of Benguet, Cagayan and the Cordillera mountains were isolated by landslides and floods.

The typhoon weakened as it headed towards northern Taiwan with wind speeds up to 180 kph (162 mph).

Rabonza said the toll could rise as weather conditions improve and the disaster agency gets more reports from the field.

Several shops here reopened yesterday, although Mayor Bernardo Vaneeta already public and private offices to operate for only half a day while city personnel cleared roads of debris left by the landslides.

The Benguet Electric Cooperative had also restored partly its 40 percent of the city.

The city government pegged typhoon-related damage at P200 million, which almost matched the damage recorded during the onslaught of typhoon "Feria" in 2001, according to city administrator Bert Pinlac.

Pinlac said the steps, meanwhile is more realistic than the P4.5 million damage posted by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Agriculture officials estimated that damage to rice and corn crops would reach about P9 million (RTZ,0001).

At least seven employees were reported along 34-km Baguio-Benguet Road while at least three road cuts were reported along the 34-km Benguet Road.

With reports from Manuel Cabreros, Frank Cimatu, Cristina Arcadio, Lynelle Ruffin Jr. and Bonnielinn Gatdet, PhI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Jeannie Dreijan, Gene Villa, Jong Rebuyon and Anselmo Roque, PhI Central Luzon Desk; Reuters and AFP

Rebel officer cuts ties with Magdalo group

A FORMER REBEL ARMY OFFIcer facing coup charges yesterday renounced his links with the Magdalo group of military mutineers charged with the failed coup of July 2003 and admitted he held talks with communist guerrillas.

The statement by 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, who was captured in Mindanao a month after escaping from military detention, is likely to be used by the military to support its claim that rebel officers and the communist guerrillas tried to form a tactical alliance to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

San Juan said yesterday he met with communist rebels after his escape from detention.

He declined to give details of his talks with a senior regional communist guerrilla commander, who the military identified to Tim Abraham.

San Juan was among young captains and lieutenants from elite army units—calling themselves the Magdalo group—who led about 300 soldiers in briefly occupying the Oakwood Premier HOG3 at the Ayala Center mall in the Makati financial district in July 2003.

Describing themselves as reformist officers, they demanded that the President and other officials resign, claiming her government and its military were corrupt. They surrendered 18 hours later and were detained at Fort Bonifacio. Seven officers fled to avoid arrest after efforts escaped to Jolo.

ARMY 1Lt. Lawrence San Juan reaffirms his loyalty to the military's chain of command and the leadership of President Macapagal-Arroyo. AFP PHOTO

Fought on offshore, three of whom escaped with San Juan in January. Officials said the seven captured were jailed to await the Congress and so-called reconciliation process.

The government has charged 96 officers and soldiers in rebellion and military courts on charges related to the 2003 coup attempt.

A civilian has been dealing to mastermind the raid, with the military was part of a larger plot to seize power and oppress a 15 member junta.

Pending its an a prospective democracy of Filipino, San Juan said he was "breaking away from the Magdalo and the Makabayang Kawal Pilipino and again pledge allegiance to the Constitution and the Armed Forces of the Philippines."

San Juan's documentary proves they were in complete agreement from his defiance against when he was captured last Feb. 22 in Pulot Grande, Batangas, about a month after he and three other Magdalo members escaped.

Yesterday, the six face-to-face San Juan appeared before the media very much chastened, apologizing to his family, the AFP and the Filipino people.

In a limited question and answer session with reporters, San Juan said that shortly before his capture he met with Abraham, the top communist leader in the Southern Tagalog region.

Officials have claimed that the meeting showed that the Magdalo group had allied itself with the communists.

San Juan yesterday said Jose Christopher Belmonte, the Magdalo lawyer who was with him when he was captured, was at the meeting with Abraham. Belmonte, who earlier denied meeting with the communist leaders, could not be reached for comment yesterday.

San Juan refused to say what was discussed with the communists. He also did not name the Magdalo's financiers and supporters.

"Bawal kasi ito eh (it's not allowed to say anything about the operations)," he said in Pilipino. "Ayaw kong i-answer ang question, 'la sori."

He said he was neither forced, threatened nor promised a reward in exchange for his statements.

Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said San Juan's statements would have effect because of his military rank and file ties.

"There will be no changes. He will be subjected to the same restrictions," he said.

In a related development, a Philippine Air Force official said the PAF would ask the AFP for a copy of the report of the military's inquiry into the Feb. 24 attempted coup.

Senior investigators are particularly interested in the role that retired Chief Supt. Maximino Wenceslao, former head of the PNP's Special Action Force, played in the coup attempt, said a PAF official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Wenceslao and three officers of the commando unit were detained following reports that the SAF had planned to take hostage then PNP Director General Avelino Lomibao and force Troyo to withdraw support from the President.

Lomibao had Pasoco investigated, "conditionally cleared" and allowed to retire, the source said.

The source said the PNP failed to obtain "concrete evidence" to pin down Pasoco. In fact, Brahimi Mingkung, Chief Inspector Jo le Ding and Inspector Ryan Polonia.

"The case against Pasoco was never closed," the source said. *AP with Dona Pazzibugan and Luige del Puerto*

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Retired generals get 20-day court reprieve from eviction

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

RETIRED MILITARY AIR POLICE GENERALS yesterday secured a right of retail after the Pasig City Regional Trial Court issued a 20-day temporary restraining order stopping their eviction from a disputed housing compound in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City.

Pasig City RTC Branch 266 Judge Ramon Bato ordered all concerned officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines "to refrain from performing further acts of eviction" within the apartment compound "for a period of 20 days."

The retired generals, who claimed they bought the property for P11.8 million in 1995, had formed the Southside Homeowners Association Incorporated (SHAI) and had brought the case to the court.

In their petition for a TRO, the complainants pointed out that the Pasig City RTC Branch 71 had dismissed in 2005 the complaint the AFP had filed to eagerly evict them from the compound.

SHAI members also told the court the same decision was affirmed by the Court of Appeals in 2005 which segregated SHAI's ownership of the Aurang Compound, which they said was no longer part of the Fort Bonifacio.

"In view of the foregoing, the Court is convinced that plaintiffs are entitled to the temporary restraining order relief prayed for," Bato said in his order yesterday.

Yesterday, the families of the retired generals rated to form human barricades at the entrance of the 46-hectare Aurang Compound to prevent military trucks from loading their belongings.

A brief scuffle ensued between the residents and soldiers after some of the latter allegedly tried to enter the compound without a court order.

Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. called off the eviction due to the bad weather that gave the "convincing" grounds and their families until Sunday to move out.

"It's raining and we gave them a two-day extension. Hindi ba [how many would be against human eviction]," he told reporters.

Esperon said the Army would not be filing criminal charges to 70-armed military and police officials who could stand to resign military careers inside Aurang. There are 300 more to reside Aurang.

So far only eight have voluntarily moved out, one of them former AFP chief of staff Roy Cimatu.

Others who reportedly promised to relocate only cause are are former military chief of staff Romeo de Villanueva and Benjamin Defensor, former Army chief Gregorio Cendaña and former police chief Edgardo Aglipay.

Under military housing regulations, the families of officers who have resigned or retired have to clean their quarters within 30 days.

Esperon said all the quarters inside the Aurang area should be occupied by active officers. He said after five years, the 46-hectare prime property with a market value of at least P12 billion would be turned over to the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) for disposition.

The property is being claimed by SHAI. But the BCDA has challenged the SHAI's claim before the Supreme Court, where the case is still pending.

The BCDA claimed that the SHAI altered or made the transfer certificate of title over Aurang.

Other prominent occupants of Aurang include former military deputy chief and now defense undersecretary Ernesto Carolino, former Army Southern Luzon Command chief Alfonso Tangtang, former Air Force Tactical Operations Command chief now interior undersecretary Nicolas Bensalo, former Army chief Guillermo Pacsi, former Marine commandant Romulo Mallillin, former PMA superintendent Pedro de Veyra, and retired Air Force Major Gener al Adrian Balce.

MISS UNIVERSE HOPEFULS
Miss Philippines Liz Andrea Ramoncaine III other contestants for a 2006 Miss Universe pageant photograph in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, Thursday

Court orders Esperon to produce Lim

By Christian V. Esguerra and Marguex C. Ortiz

THE COURT OF APPEALS YESTERDAY GRANTED the petition for habeas corpus filed by the wife of detained Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, a move that could pave the way for his release from a top-security military facility in Tanay, Rizal.

In a resolution, Associate Justice Fernanda Lampas Peralta ordered incoming Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon to present Lim before the court at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday and explain the reasons for his detention.

In her 22-page petition for habeas corpus, Lim's wife Alicegen said her husband was "being unlawfully detained and deprived of his liberty upon the orders of General Esperon."

Lim's wife noted that the detained general was never presented a written authority covering his transfer to Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

Lim's lawyer Vicente Ferdinand was surprised the Justice Joint Visitayi commander who was accused of leading the aborted coup last February would eventually be freed from the maximum security prison in Camp Capinpin.

"They have no case against him yet they have been detaining him," he said the lawyer in yesterday in an interview.

Claiming Lim's life was under threat, Esperon earlier this week ordered his transfer from Fort Bonifacio to Camp Capinpin.

Ferdinand said Lim's detention violated the Articles of War which stipulates that a person arrested by military law could be arrested or confined "only when he is properly charged."

One of Lim's co-accused yesterday denied involvement in the aborted February coup attempt.

Maj. Jason Aquino, former operations chief of a Scout Ranger regiment, which Lim once headed, yesterday appeared at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) because Makati Aquino was finally given a chance to say his side," lawyer Alex Avisado, Aquino's counsel, told reporters.

Aquino, who is also detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, arrived at the NBI with his lawyers and with Avisado shortly before 12 p.m.

NBI Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda said he asked Aquino to clarify an affidavit which the latter allegedly issued on Feb. 28.

"But his lawyers requested us to give them until noon. They have to secure re-elaboration or explanation of the affidavit," Esmeralda said.

Avisado said they advised Aquino to refrain from signing the affidavit which may have been composed while Aquino "was under duress."

SHARP

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EVERYTHING'S BETTER IF IT'S SHARP.

IMF lauds RP fiscal, debt reforms

A SENIOR INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND official yesterday lauded the Philippines' efforts to pursue fiscal and debt reforms, saying the measures should set the country on course to achieve sustainable economic growth.

"I am impressed by the significant progress that has been made with economic reforms," Takatoshi Kato, the IMF deputy managing director, said in a statement after a visit to Manila.

He commended Philippine government officials for accelerating the pace of fiscal adjustment, including the landmark value-added tax reform.

"These efforts should help set the country on a higher sustainable growth path," Kato said.

The government last year expanded the value-added tax to cover power and oil products, and raised excise taxes, raised the VAT rate to 12 percent from 10 percent.

Higher revenue and controlled spending allowed the Philippines to post a budget surplus in April and May narrowing the budget deficit to P44.2 billion for the first five months of 2006, from P67.8 billion in the same period last year.

The government also managed to control the size of public debt to 71 percent of gross domestic product in March, from 71 percent of GDP at the end of 2005, according to data released last month by the Bureau of Treasury.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves yesterday clarified that the government remained committed to balancing its budget by 2008 without sacrificing badly needed spending on infrastructure and social services.

The government was also sticking to its budget deficit target of P93 billion for 2007, Teves said, contradicting media reports that the shortfall goal for next year was widened to P96 billion.

Two senior budget department officials had told Reuters on Thursday the government was open to raising next year's budget deficit target and to pushing back the balanced budget goal to 2010 to allow for more spending.

"The government's policy on reducing the deficit and balancing the budget has not changed," Teves said in a statement.

"We remain committed to the 2007 deficit reduction target of P93 billion, and to balancing the budget by end-2008," he said.

"We intend to do this, however, without reducing our spending on infrastructure and social services," he said, adding reforms aimed at raising tax revenues and improving tax administration would help ensure the Philippines met its fiscal goals.

The Philippines, Asia's most active issuer of sovereign debt after Japan, wants to limit its budget deficit to P125 billion this year, or 2.1 percent of GDP.

But a finance official previously said that this year's shortfall was likely to be below target after Congress failed to pass the 2006 national budget, which provided for higher spending.

Last year, the government had a below-target budget shortfall of P146.3 billion, or 2.7 percent of GDP.

The government originally planned to enjoy net tax budget deficits by 3% if not adjusted the goal to two years earlier reflect its planned fiscal reforms, including passage of a law broadening and raising the VAT.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said in a televised round-table discussion on Wednesday the preferred the 2% budget line than her economic managers wanted the earlier goal of 2008.

Teves said it was important to stick to the fiscal reform program and that the government would not be pressured into delaying the retirement of costs budget deficit by 2008.

From Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said the President was confident the government can achieve a balanced budget in 2008, "very much ahead of target."

"The overall trend of the government is declining, fiscal reform is working and we have growing political stability," said Bunye.

Teves' assurances came after proposals were made to push the target of attaining a balanced budget to 2010, the original target under the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

However, with the impact of recently implemented revenue-raising measures, as well as tight government spending, the country's economic managers decided to take a more aggressive stance by aiming for a new deficit by 2008.

The government's ability to meet the latest fiscal program helped boost the country's international credit image, with credit rating firms Fitch and Standard & Poor's giving the country a "stable" outlook. *AP with Reuters, Michaela Ibarra and Jeff C. Cabacungan Jr.*

10 OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

President Macapagal-Arroyo congratulates Christopher Joseph Alviar, one of the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines awardees, in Malacañang Palace Friday. Alviar graduated magna cum laude in BS Political Science from St. Mary's University in Nueva Vizcaya. The nine other awardees are Michael Vincent Uy, Cindy Tan, Phoenix Jason Rivera, Prince Cassidy Villegas, Jerome Dayao, Patricia Anne Jimenez, Michaella Bravo, Marietta Hope Samaya and Karina Bellido Cosmero.

"Pareho naman pala ang epekto.
Yung mas mahal pa ha ang pipiliin mo!"

PHAREX

3 Filipinos hurt in fire on LPG ship in Jordan

THREE FILIPINOS WERE INJURED after their cargo ship carrying liquefied petroleum gas caught fire in the port of Aqaba, Jordanian Thursday.

The three were identified as Renato Cardo, 32, Cyrus Dorcel, 31, and marino Cabanatuan, 37.

They are all confined at the Princess Iman al-Hussein Hospital in Aqaba.

They suffered burns in their faces but their eyes were not affected, according to Vice Consul Mark Ramey who visited them at the hospital. Ramey said the three were among the 13-member all Filipino crew of "Tenaryan," a Panamanian-flagged cargo ship.

The injured seamen's families have been informed of the accident. They were also assured that consular assistance would be extended, including "their return to the Philippine after their full recovery from the injuries," the DFA said.

An Agence France Presse report from Amman said the vessel, chartered by a Jordanian company, was carrying 6,200 tons of gas, of which 2,144 tons had been unshipped, the official said.

The cause of the blast, which thereon had brought under control, was not immediately known. *Reports by Alikin Bisaro and AFP*

Correction

IN THE JULY 13 ISSUE, JUAN MONCADA'S column on Page A/18—"Bullies with diplomas"—misspelled the surname of a professor at the mirasol de Manila University. The professor's name is Onofre Pagsanjan—not Pagsanjan.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mercantile Street, Makati City, fax 896-87-47-102-541, e-mail address dayde@inquirer.net.ph.

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SATURDAY, JULY 15, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER A1

Let's talk, new DepEd secretary tells protesters

By Michael Lim Ubac

SAYING THE FAILED WERE "PREMATURE," Sarlac Rep. Josh Lapus yesterday sought a dialogue with employees of the Department of Education who are opposing his appointment as education secretary.

"Let's talk," said Lapus, urging the DepEd union to suspend their judgment first.

"I can't understand why they don't want me when they have yet to know me," said Lapus, an economics professor who helped craft the controversial package of the former administration under the Sarlac cojuangco-aquino angle.

Nonetheless, Lapus reiterated the position assistant, saying it was all right as long as they don't disrupt the operations at the department.

Bohan Deputy Majority Leader Antonio Cerilles took the rostrum for Lapus and asked DepEd employees and officials not "to relegate themselves the task of choosing their department chief which is a presidential prerogative.

"To doubt critics, I appeal to them to give him a chance to prove that he deserves the DepEd post. Let's be fair to him," said Cerilles.

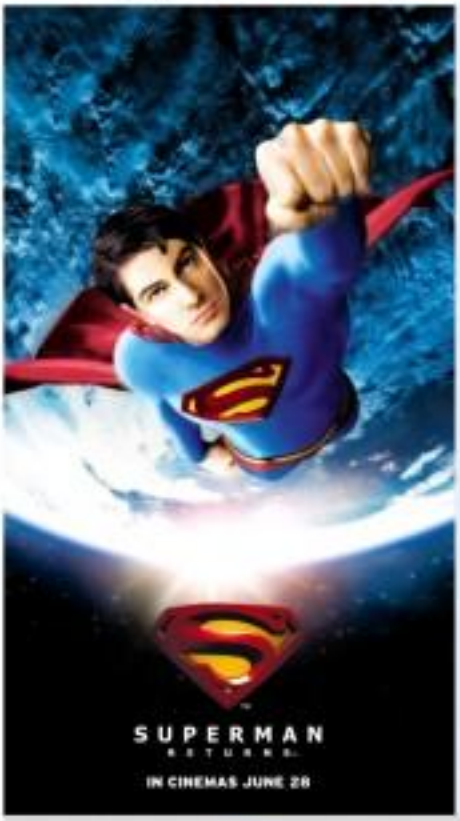
Cerilles said members of the Cabinet were part of the official family of the President.

"Any individual chosen by President Arroyo to be part of her Cabinet should be given an opportunity to prove his or her worth," said Cerilles, who was a Cabinet secretary during the Estrada administration.

He said the door was open for protesters to leave DepEd.

Cerilles said Lapus' critics were being unfair to him, considering his strong qualifications and credentials.

"He has a wealth of experience and achievement during his stints both at the private sector and government. There is no doubt Josh can steer the challenges to DepEd given his track record," said Cerilles.



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SAMSUNG

Dipolog bishop . . .

From page A1

meeting it is.

"I was offered an envelope apparently containing a reimbursement of my expenses for coming to Manila," he told the bureau. "But I refused, because I thought that was the prudent thing to do."

Labrador said the offer was made to him in the air Monday last week during a meeting arranged by Malacañang between the secretaries of education, earlier Mr. and health, on one hand, and several CEO protesters from Mindanao, on the other.

Uses for religious affairs

Besides Hingpanes, another bishop earlier this week also told the bureaucrats of the distributions of envelopes by Palace people to CEO protesters.

On their Monday, July 3, Mass guests could be seen approached at Pope Pius by Fatima Valdez, Malacañang's undersecretary for religious affairs.

He said Valdez was talking about so-called "discretionary funds" once where a staff member of hers came up behind him and thrust the envelopes into his hand.

"If they could do that to him, then they could do that to ordinary people," the bishop, recalling angry, said.

Letter kept

Mangudadatu said he promptly asked Fr. Aristo Pilario, acting CBCP secretary general, for advice in Malacañang the episcopal group with a separate letter explaining why he rejected the offer.

He said he had kept a copy of the letter.

Mangudadatu said he wasn't happy that, more than the money was intended for livelihood projects in his diocese.

He said he was surprised that he was being given money when he hadn't even requested for projects, and he chose considering participation of church councilors and does. He said Valdez' pitch focused on parish-based dispensaries and free drugs.

Another bishop offered

"I don't accept that kind of money," he said. "We shouldn't be trashing the people to be beggars."

But if Malacañang was indeed sincere about such offers, Hingpanes said it also should go directly to projects like hospitals, which are "needed more than helicopter rides." He said the Palace should also cultivate equalized bonds to help develop self-sustaining livelihood for the people.

A fellow bishop from a poor diocese in the south yesterday told the bureau he was offered the envelope during the plenary partaking's noon break. He said the invitation happened other last Friday or Saturday when bishops were preparing their pastoral statement.

Upon entering the lobby, he said, a woman in her "late 40s or early 50s" approached him and handed him an envelope "for poverty alleviation" programs in his diocese.

'It's all a sham'

"I declined right away," he told the bureau, saying the offer also appeared more like an attempt to "subvert the bishops' position" on the political issues.

"It's a sham. What's misleading is that they're doing it to bishops. That's very, very bad."

For his part, Lobrestes cold efforts of cheap ever and workhorses in the form of livelihood projects couldn't necessary mean an end to the Malacañang to bribe the bishops.

"I really can't consider them bribes because they are not for the individual interest of the bishops," he said. "They're a way of saying that government projects are available and parishes can qualify for them."

Lobrestes said that in the Mass, the hypocrisy of the claims that lady mentioned in Malacañang, he and several 10 parishes discussed with three Cabinet members issues like population management, rice education, and mining and the environment.

Among the problems present were Archbishop Jose Serafin of San Fernando, Pampanga, a staunch critic of the controversial rice-education modules, and Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez of Malolos, an anti-mining advocate.

"It was a positive dialogue and it's not secured," Lobrestes said. "It's a way for the government to listen to the concerns of the people."

Envelopes appeared

At the end of the meeting, he said staff members who had come with the government officials extended envelopes to the bishops.

He said the envelopes contained "cash for some and [free] tickets for others," supposedly to enable participants for their expenses for the Manila trip.

"I didn't bother to open mine," he said. "I felt I didn't have to accept it."

Lobrestes said some bishops accepted the offer, explaining that it was Malacañang that had arranged the affair, anyway.

"It should be left in the discretion of the bishops [whether to accept]," he said, noting that the gendarme covered smaller offers of transportation or meals—from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor).

Malacañang denial

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said all talk of Hingpanes's allegation that money was intended for livelihood projects in his diocese.

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Malacañang denial

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said all talk of Malacañang's alleging that money the bishops was nothing but to-register being earned by "losers out to-decide" the administration.

"There was never a Palace-sponsored, Malacañang-based dinner for the bishops," he said. "Whatever happened was an initiative of the bishops themselves. Therefore, there was no envelopes passed," he said.

'No one was bribed'

Defensor also denied an ABS-CBN report quoting Prime Bishop Pedro Arigo as saying that he received an envelope containing P20,000 in cash after attending a meeting with President Arroyo and her top officials.

"No one from Malacañang is giving money to the bishops," Defensor said.

Told that the bishops were the ones making the allegation, Defensor said: "It is the right of any bishop to say whatever he/she/I don't think it's fair to the other bishops to say in media/publicly that we were bribed. [Anybody] to say we were bribed."

Defensor appealed to "Tower" he claimed were out to discredit the government to upset the Church from intriguing.

He said those forces wanted to discredit the consumer mode by the CBCP that it was not inclined to support the new impeachment case against Ms. Arroyo.

It is for the poor

Defensor also said the Palace does not give aid directly to bishops but to the archdioceses and it is intended for the poor.

Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo admitted he showed up in a "blowout" by Zamboanga Bishop Cornelio Wenceslao de Medina but would not attend social event.

Saludo lamented that "certain groups are making mistakes that are misfortune and impugn the integrity of those bold men to make it appear that they could be swayed with matters [of benefit]."

MOTHER MAKES HOW FLOODS—Amid scrap the parents of the three missing UP students from travelling to Negroso, Bulacan on Friday after learning that their bodies were found in the area. Concepcion Requeza (left), Elinda Catalpan (3rd from right) and husband Ruben (middle).

Batangas raids yield arms cache

By Luige B. del Puerto

SIMULTANEOUS POLICE RAIDS on suspected hideouts of criminal gangs in Batangas province yesterday uncovered a cache of weapons with enough equipment to fight a war in Iraq, or say police officials said.

At least 15 people were detained in the raids that targeted four houses in Barangay Balagtas and Bolbogan in Batangas City and in the towns of Malabrigo and Rosario.

"It seems like Barrio going to Iraq," said Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, head of the criminal and investigation division of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, who headed the search team.

The weapons cache, said to be enough to arm one platoon of the police's elite Special Action Force, allegedly belonged to the "Black Shark Gang" and "Batangas Group," two criminal gangs operating in what he is highly-placed sources said to be "untouchables" because they enjoyed police protection.

The 15 arrested were included two Batangas captains Ronald and Arthur Blanco, police said.

Cops detained

A police source said a local cop was caught attempting to remove an M-47 and an Ingram recovered from one of the houses, after the raid.

"The top find already police three in for at the gate, but one troops spotted him," said the source.

Another local cop was detained by the CIDG in Manila hours although it was not immediately clear why.

De los Santos said some of the firearms appeared to have been licensed, but they still "exceeded" the normal number of allowable weapons.

A CIDG statement said the raid on the houses of the two Blancos in Barrio San and Bolbogan yielded 14 high-powered firearms and ammunition.

In Malitol, police raided the house of Miguel Leonel Buenagua Jr. and seized another 14 high-powered weapons.

Another name still going on in Malabrigo town.

"There were one from this discharge," said SAF chief Senior Supt. Rolando Nicdao, showing reporters a rifle grenade seized from the Director, while the police said were a type of weapons issued only to the military.

2 criminal gangs

De los Santos said the two gangs have been reported to engage in various illegal activities, such as kidnapping, drug trafficking, gun for hire, and protection rackets.

Arthur Blanco and Miguel Leonel Buenagua denied allegations that they were involved in criminal activities.

Buenagua said he was a businessman, not a criminal.

"I have been good companion to engage in that," he said.

His lawyer said he was also engaged in quarrying and construction.

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Firearms licensed

De los Santos said that the firearms were licensed under or near his house, but maintained that the police only got two guns from him, an M14 rifle and a 45-mm handgun, both licensed.

Arthur Blanco admitted keeping high-powered firearms but these were licensed, he said.

He said he and his brother had been receiving death threats, adding that their enemies included the Bitoh Meads gang.

Police reports that the men were keeping powerful weapons, police said, received reports that a carpet in the bombing of Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez was sighted in the area.

The supposed bomber got his training in Mindanao and sets an explosives report, the CIDG report said.

Bishops are dirty-minded—Gonzalez

By Armand N. Nocum

MR. BIG TALENT ON OFFICIAL trust leaders, coup plotters, even movie stars. Defender, former Government Road Economist cracked his pain on the state of the cloth.

Reacting to reports quoting some bishops as saying that Malacañang staffers had distributed cash envelopes to parishes during last month's bishops' meeting in Manila, Gonzalez said: "The people who said that are dirty-minded. They should first inquire about the purpose why such assistance is given. If it is given for a noble purpose, why not?"

Clergy doesn't understand

Gonzalez also told reporters that no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo had told her Cabinet yesterday that she had an knowledge of a supposed victory dinner for bishops which was supposedly arranged by undersecretary for religious affairs Fatima Valdez.

Ms Arroyo "vehemently denied that," Gonzalez said, that he said the President had deemed a prayer to no longer have this issue by uncovering the activities of some Church leaders.

According to Gonzalez, what the clergy does not understand is that the President has made it her goal to implement "poverty alleviation" programs through the parishes because it is the only way she could ensure that financial and other aid would reach the intended beneficiaries.

He said Ms Arroyo had grown wary about channeling the money through barangays and through local government units because some officials were susceptible in pocketing "million-peso" funds.

Role of parishes

"Look at the calamity funds. In many instances, these do not reach them because [some officials] are misappropriated by local government officials," he said.

Gonzalez said ministers of Cabinet meetings would elaborate that Ms Arroyo had requested to implement the anti-poverty alleviation programs through church parishes and parochial schools.

He said these came in the form of feeding programs and support for efforts by private parochial and parish schools to absorb students who would no longer enter government schools.

Rising classrooms shortage

Gonzalez said this was the President's idea of resolving the problem of classroom shortage in public schools.

"So these financial assistance is given for poverty alleviation and to address the problem of classroom [shortage]. They are not dishonest and they are certainly not bribes," he said.

He asked the clergy to seriously look at this perspective instead of going to the media with stories about Palace people [or the] Church leaders.

Bishop finds nothing wrong with envelopes

By Jaya Arevalo
and Jerry Esplanada
PDI Visayas Bureau

MANDAUE CITY—MALACAÑANG has found an ally in Bishop Precious Cantillas of Masbate to disallow Levite. He finds nothing wrong with bishops receiving help from the government.

Cantillas said the offer of distributing to help the poor should not be looked at as an attempt to "bribe" the Catholic Church.

"Everybody is trying to help the poor but why is it that when President Arroyo offers her help through the Church, a offer not accepting is viewed by the opposition," Cantillas asked.

"It is better that the money is channeled through the Church or other credible institution than to give it to the politicians, where most of it will go into their pockets," he added.

Implication

Cantillas said other Catholic prelates in the Visayas, led by CBCP president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, denied being at the so-called "thank you" dinner hosted by Malacañang last week.

Lagdameo, in a statement, admitted that bishops received envelopes containing money but they "did not have any knowledge of the alleged plan of Malacañang to use these gifts or envelopes for political ends."

Unfair to CBCP

"It was only later that they realized the implications of the offer. Some, we know, returned their envelopes," said Lagdameo.

For his part, Bishop Jose Palma said: "As far as I know, there was no party-hosted for an bishops during or after our plenary. And as far as I know, no bishops received their P20,000 or P30,000 as reported in the media."

"And if ever there was some, I repeat, some bishops who accepted that so-called party or sort give money it's not fair to say that they represent the entire CBCP episcopal unit. With reports from Marie Berga in Puerto Princesa, Inquirer and Felipe Gil Inc. PDI Visayas Bureau

OFWs' dollar remittances jumped by 30% in May

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month of the year to $4.9 billion, up by 11.5 percent from a year earlier. The government expects that full-year remittances to be at least 10 percent above the record of $10.7 billion in 2005.

Account-to-financial services

Ramon Bautista of Philippine Department Standards Inc. (PDS) said remittances demand for Filipino workers as well as more efficient banking services helped boost the remittance figures.

"It is expected that with the recent linking of the three major automated teller machine (ATM) networks, beneficiaries of overseas workers will have access to at least 10 percent more branches provided by commercial banks, encouraging utilization of formal channels for remittance transfers," Tumapon said.

Preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration showed that the total number of deployed workers rose by 12.5 percent in May.

For the first five months, land-based workers deployed abroad increased by 15.1 percent to 115,557 versus a year ago even as land-based workers declined by 3.6 percent to 150,795 during the same period.

The OFWs likewise served more money in May to take advantage of the foreign exchange rate.

Bulk from US

After peaking at $1.60/$1 in March, the peso depreciated and the $1 bandaw in May thus allowing OFW beneficiaries to get more pesos for their dollars.

The bulk of the OFW remittances came from the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, United Kingdom, Japan, Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates, Tumapon noted.

The Philippines is now the world's third biggest recipient of migrant remittances next to India and Mexico.

Despite the growing cash transfers from Filipinos abroad, Philippine banks continue to strengthen their capacity.

For instance, NCBC Tele-Money, the remittance arm of Nickel Commercial Banking Corp., yesterday entered into a strategic partnership with UK-based Travelex Money Transfer (TMT).

Professionals

Through the tie-up with TMT and its local representative Asian FX Money Exchange, OFW beneficiaries can receive their TMT remittances in any of the 270 branches centers of NCBC and Cebu Union. BCBC senior vice president and Tele-Money Group head.

Bautista said the strong remittance flows were also due to the fact that a big portion of Filipino leaving for abroad consisted of highly paid professionals such as doctors, nurses and information technology experts.

The Department of Labor and Employment yesterday said the deployment of OFWs rose by 1.4% percent in the first semester to 308,928 as compared to 304,525 in the same period last year. With a report from Aurora Aning

Police, LGUs ordered to play more active role in fight vs NPAs

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday ordered the police and local government units to play a more active role in the campaign against Communist insurgents, officials said.

Ms Arroyo signed an executive order allowing provinces and towns to draw more funds from state coffers to support local security efforts, including intelligence gathering and surveillance, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno told reporters.

"This is very timely," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said. "The armed forces cannot be present in all areas of the country while the police do not have the capability even though they are everywhere."

He said the President's order would "delineate the specific roles" of the military, police and local executives in the fight against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its 7,000-member New People's Army (NPA).

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said the order is in line with Arroyo's previous instructions for the military to crush, within two years, the CPP-NPA networks in the provinces surrounding Manila. AFP

RP issues travel ban to Lebanon, sets evacuation

By Nikko Dizon

THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN BEIRUT HAS advised Filipinos in Lebanon "to remain where they are but prepare for immediate relocation to safer, pre-designated areas", the Department of Foreign Affairs said late yesterday afternoon.

In its advisory, known as Alert Level 2, was imposed by the embassy following the country's air strikes by Israel in defiant.

The government has also announced a ban on travel to Lebanon.

Some 30,000 Filipinos, mostly as domestic helpers, are working in Lebanon.

At a Cabinet meeting, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo and Labor officials had met to "review the recently situation in Lebanon as reported by the Philippine Embassy in Beirut, and to coordinate on government plans to protect Filipinos already in that country and those planning to work there."

The DFA and DOLE had also decided to recommend to Arroyo to stop urging Filipinos planning to travel to Lebanon to postpone their trip in view of the current security situation there, said Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who oversees the migrant workers' affairs.

Good RP-Taiwan ties help rebuild lives in S. Leyte

TWO MONTHS AFTER THE LANDSLIDE THAT killed some 1,200 in Guinsaugon, St. Bernard in Southern Leyte, many survivors can now look forward to having a new place of their own at the Governor Rodings IGG Energy Village in nearby Liloan town.

Through the partnership of the government and private sectors, the project will not only build housing units for displaced families, but also a communal hall with a day care center, a multi-purpose center, a basketball court, livelihood programs, as well as health and social services, child and youth development and values formation programs and DSWD-implemented after the resettlement.

The Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office (Taipei), through the Manila Economic and Cultural Office, has donated $900,000 to build 12 classrooms in two school buildings. Vice representative Dr. Henry Liu, who attended the groundbreaking ceremony and signed the agreement, said Taiwan's assistance to the Philippines in the aftermath of the landslide is "a testament to the friendship between our two countries."

Southern Leyte Gov. Roger Locsin said the schools will be known as the Taiwan School of San Francisco, Southern Leyte. The buildings will be completed in three to four months' time, with 10 duplex residential units in the IGC Energy Village in Liloan.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, July 15, 2006
15th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 6:1-8
Gospel: Matthew 10:24-33

Jesus said to his apostles, "A student is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the master of the household Beelzebul, how much more the members of the household! So do not be afraid of them.

"There is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, and nothing hidden that will not be made known. What I say to you in the dark, you must speak in the light. What you hear in private, proclaim from the housetops.

"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a few pennies? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's consent. As for you, every hair of your head has been counted. So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

"Whoever acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my Father in heaven. Whoever disowns me before others I will disown before my Father in heaven."

Commentary:

Jesus, we read today, is only one who could be a prophet, who says: "Here I am Lord, send me!" He says this despite the power of God and despite his own unworthiness and is purged in the fire of God. This Isaiah is the prototype for the Servant in "the suffering servant of Yahweh."

And Jesus warns us that we will be persecuted, insulted and even put to death. Storms are normal. But we are to proclaim the Word in the light and what God has been whispered to us and heard. But God does claim to every hair on our heads. We should of nothing! Because we stand with God and he all know God sees us.

Quezon Publishing Inc., # Roosevelt Ave., [illegible] Quezon City 1100 PO Box [illegible] Tel. [illegible] Fax [illegible] Email [illegible] Website [illegible] Send your comments/reflections to [illegible]

GMA off to Brunei today for Sultan's 60th birthday

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Brunei—Preparations were in full swing Friday for the 60th birthday of one of the world's last reigning monarchs in the days of rich sultanates of Brunei, as dignitaries and blue bloods from around Southeast Asia began arriving for the customary lavish celebrations.

The extraordinarily wealthy Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, whose family has ruled the Southeast Asian nation for around 600 years, turns 60 on Saturday. He has presided over Brunei for nearly four decades.

A 20-minute fireworks display above the gold-domed 1,788-room palace will cap off a royal dinner banquet on Saturday.

Among the dinner guests will be Philippine President Gloria Arroyo, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Singapore leader Lee Hsien Loong and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen. Royalty and state leaders from Jordan and Malaysia are also expected. Officials said some of the guests had already arrived, but refused to provide any details.

Muhammadong said Ms Arroyo was scheduled to leave today for Brunei at 11 a.m.

The ring-topped masonry of 500,000 has been celebrating since early July and festivities—including traditional boat races, concerts, fireworks displays and buffets—will continue through August.

Money dolcorum

The sultan's birthday degree is legendary. In the past, he has thrown five-star resorts with superstars Michael Jackson and Celine Dion, and one year he even built an amusement park with complimentary rides. The sultan is also known to dole out money to his subjects on his birthday.

The royal family is also famous for its extravagance. Over, while playing polo with Prince Charles, Hassanal had his polo shoes delivered...by helicopter—to him at the polo field.

2,000 dignitaries

This year's festivities are slightly lower-key. Information Ministry official Amir Zaharia told reporters.

On Saturday, Hassanal will inspect a 2,000-strong guard of honor in the center of the capital Bandar Seri Begawan, and then host around 2,000 dignitaries at the main palace.

Conspicuously missing from the guest list is the ruler's younger brother Jefri, currently living in exile in London—banned for a series of ill-fated blunders and extravagance that led to more than $7 billion in losses in the 1990s.

The sultan is one of the world's richest men, and presides over vast—but dwindling—oil resources that have turned the tiny nation on the island of Borneo into one of the richest countries per capita.

Nonstop coverage

Huge billboards of Hassanal famous the sexually decay capital, and many shops bring banners wishing the sultan happy birthday while restaurants were offering discounts to mark the day.

The state's family controls all key government positions, and critics are rarely seen free of the ruler.

The central bank issued commemorative gold coins to mark the occasion and state-run TV has been running nonstop coverage of the sultan and his achievements.

Even Friday's opposite-Muslim-majority Brunei were dedicated in the sultan. AP

3 Pinoy kids are world jr. champs

From page A1

"We just showed the world that we don't only have Manny Pacquiao but very good juniors as well," said Bong Montanelli, president of the Amateur Boxing Federation of the Philippines.

Ryan Monsalve won the only other trophy salvage for the Philippines, placing third in the boys' Class F (Grade) under-51 division. Monsalve, who is also from Mindanao, was knocked out in the Class D and Miguel Talisayan (who) rounded up Class (74-226) fighting the big boys in his junior year in Class C as Concerned.

Surprise sweetener

While Antinan and Rodriguez lived up to their roles as the top two of a delegation supported by Philippine Airlines, Samsung, PCSO, Pagcor and ICTSI, it was Lacquian's gutsy performance in the 46-kg division that provided the surprise sweetener.

The 7-year-old daughter of the former chief of staff of ex-President Fidel Ramos lost a four-bout overnight bout early last week (two 20-four punch for bodies in a four-hole open from the 11th that paved the way for a five-shot swing.

Lequigan shot an even par 58 for a 101 aggregate, beating American Allison Gregor who also had a 58 for 105.

If it was time to send a message to those who stole her clubs on the eve of the tournament, Jordina's final round sucked them big time. She was three of spectacular in a four-under 68 effort and a 209 total that left Arizona's Lindsey Wimmer (71-217) and the rest gasping for breath.

Joke at clubhouse

The joke at the clubhouse was over if Ardina had saved other trophies for the day she would still end up winning. She capped her second victory in the world championships—she also took the 8-under crown in 2002—with birdies on the last three holes and four of the last five.

It's common now Rodriguez's feat. At two-day leader Hata role faded early, the Filipino youngster went into the last two holes all-square with Chirapat Jaeo herself of Thailand.

The big breakthrough came in the form of a 9-iron tee shot that stopped eight feet from the flag. Rodriguez never ran to sink the go-ahead birdie putt and hold the lead with a regulation par on the final hole.

Rodriguez teamed up with 73-115, Jaeo'all had 73-214 and Aoki was third after a 76-216.

Class A bets

The Class A bets were to wrap up the Philippine campaign Friday at Forest Hills, Debbie de Villa, the only Filipino survivor of the cut-off in girls' play, however, was ill-fated in Unlisted Japan's Mika Miyazato.

In boys' action, Antonio Batista (73-227) was tied for 24th and Mike Yee (76-230) shared 48th.

'Bolante case very rare'

From page A1

was not very common for any US consulate to revoke a visa when the holder was not physically present at the consulate.

Hosterman said the most common reason for visa cancellation was overstaying.

"Now I have to do something really bad to get your visa revoked like that," he said.

Why did DFA keep quiet?

At a press conference held July 10 at the Philippine Consulate in LA, Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III (LP Interim) raised the question of why it took the DFA several days to release the information on Bolante's arrest.

Advocating the impeachment of President Macapagal-Arroyo at the press conference, Tañada charged that the President tried to cover up the Bolante case and criticized the Arroyo administration for continuing to refuse to address the issue.

"It's so ironic," the lawmaker said. "There I was, talking about Bolante at the consulate, and it turns out he had already been arrested. The consulate and the DFA apparently knew about the arrest and yet decided not to say anything about it."

Tañada speculated that Bolante's arrest could have been a move to keep the man in the United States for a longer period of time, if not permanently, to evade investigation for corruption.

"There's definitely more to this story than what is apparent right now," he added.

It was only on July 12 that DFA spokesperson Gilbert B. Asuque announced Bolante's July 7 arrest on reporters in Manila. Quoting Consul General Pillsson Tim, Asuque said US authorities informed the DA consulate by phone of Bolante's arrest and detention early on July 10.

Political asylum

Bolante left the Philippines last year, after snubbing repeated summonses in a Senate inquiry into the disbursement of millions of pesos in fertilizer funds to administration allies, purportedly to ensure Ms Arroyo's victory in the 2004 presidential election.

On July 13, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero quoted his sources in California as saying that Bolante was planning to apply for political asylum in the United States.

Escudero speculated that Bolante could be planning to cooperate with prosecutors in the Arroyo administration.

But Eleanora Rasmussen, regional communications manager of the US Citizenship and Immigration Services, said her agency could neither confirm nor deny that.

"Even if an asylum case has been filed, we cannot talk about it. That would be a violation of the federal Privacy Act," she said.

Rasmussen said applications for asylum would need to prove a "well-founded fear of persecution" based on any of the five grounds: race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a special social group.

Once asylum is granted, the person can stay in the United States for two years, after which he or she can become a permanent resident, she said.

Shoemirum, a former lawyer of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, said it was possible for Bolante to apply for political asylum even after the Garchitorena of his US visa.

He must present reason

At the scheduled hearing on his visa case, Bolante will have to present a reason why he should not be deported, Shoemirum said. An application for political asylum can be presented at a session that is being delayed or even by mail.

On of July 14 (July 13 in the Philippines) Bolante remains in detention at the San Pedro Detention Center in California as he undergoes deportation proceedings by the Office of Immigration Violation, said Nikki Quijano, spokesperson for the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

(Bolante) is being processed for removal pending review of his case," she said.

Asuncion confirmed that Bolante's visa had been revoked by the US Embassy in Manila, but said her agency had no information on why this was done. She said only the embassy in Manila or the State Department in Washington could provide that information.

Right to privacy

However, State Department spokesperson Carrie Cooper said they could not comment on visa issues because of visa holders' right to privacy.

Both the DFA in Manila and the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles have turned down requests from reporters to interview the consul general and other officials.

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"[Bolante's] family requested privacy," said Consul Estelito Bolante.

But Clare Quijano, spokesperson of the ICE chapter of the call-center Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, yesterday denounced the Arroyo administration for withholding information on Bolante's arrest, saying it was part of a cover-up of "one of the biggest government scams."

US Embassy, DFA mum on Bolante

From page A1

economic entity that had requested the visa revocation, he said: "Yes, we're bound by all the rules."

As to the US finding no one is talking from the camp of the ex-agriculture undersecretary cornered of being the architect of the P728-million fertilizer fund scam.

Efforts by the lawyers to reach Bolante's lawyer, Antonio Zabarte, again came to no avail yesterday, day, with the latter's staff saying he had not showed up at his office in Makati City.

Zabarte also would not answer text messages or calls made on his mobile phone. His staff said the lawyer would have been using the number of the phone for last weeks ago.

But this much was gleaned about the lawyer to whom, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Thursday, all questions about Bolante should be directed: Zabarte is lawyered for President Macapagal-Arroyo's brother-in-law, Iqua Ong "Iggy" Arroyo, in the Sun Fiesta controversy in 2003.

Iggy Arroyo, now representative of Negros Occidental, had claimed to be Jose Pidal, a pseudonym widely believed to be that of the President's husband and his older brother, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

The DFA and the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles have also been mum on Bolante's case.

But DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said: "There's no complicity here."

Asuque said in a phone interview that the consulate had sent legal officer Noemi Ong-va-nepal Bolante's visa hearing on July 12 but that Bolante had declined the consular assistance.

"They [Bolante's camp] asked that their privacy be respected," Asuque said.

No reply

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. has formally asked the US Embassy to divulge "all information" about Bolante's arrest...and is still awaiting a reply.

Magsaysay said his office sent a letter to US Ambassador Kristie Kenney last Tuesday seeking details on Bolante's arrest on July 7, including the reason behind the cancellation of his visa and his continued detention in San Pedro, California.

"There's still no reply. We are awaiting for it," the senator said, adding that he was "surprised" by reports that it was the embassy that canceled Bolante's visa.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had earlier said it might have been a "formal request" from Magsaysay, the chair of the Senate investigation into the fertilizer fund scam, that prompted the embassy to cancel the visa.

But Magsaysay yesterday said the request he sent to the US Embassy last December only sought Bolante's assistance in locating Bolante and presenting the Senate summons to him.

"That was it. We did not ask them to cancel the visa because we thought that would be beyond our jurisdiction," Magsaysay said.

"[But] we also want to know if [Bolante's arrest] was an effort of our request then," he said.

Drilon

Malacañang is blaming Senate President Franklin Drilon for Bolante's visa problem.

Quoting top-level information reaching the Palace, a Cabinet official said it was Drilon who had pushed for the cancellation of Bolante's visa, which led to his arrest in Los Angeles by US immigration authorities.

The official, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to speak on the matter, said Drilon allegedly made the request through the US Embassy, using as basis the arrest warrant issued by the senate on Bolante for his permanent snub of the inquiry into the fertilizer fund scam.

According to the official, Bolante's arrest was timed with the Senate probe to resume the inquiry.

Drilon had long requested the DFA to cancel Bolante's passport to force him to return to the Philippines. But the DFA rejected this request, saying the Senate had offered no basis for the action.

Asked yesterday to comment on the Palace official's claim, Drilon said: "That information is false. I had nothing to do with the cancellation of Bolante's visa, it's was indeed cancelled. I have not talked to anyone in the US Embassy on this issue."

No closure

Pimentel said the Senate will succeed to pull Bolante on the fertilizer fund scam on his return to the country.

"We do need him. We would still want to have him finish the investigation with his testimony," Pimentel said, adding:

"He would, in the words of American jurisprudence, be considered a material witness, which means that there may be difficulty in having a closure of the investigation without his testimony."

The senator said that while the Senate had issued a report on the fund probe, "it was not a final decision on him."

"It was just dictated by circumstances because Bolante was evading the Senate investigation. We also did not want the investigation hanging," he said.

Pimentel said it would be natural for Malacañang to help Bolante but it would not want him to return because this would dredge up the fund scam.

"The ball does not stop at the hands of Mr. Bolante. Maintaining a very profitable livelihood is a great canard in the misuse of the fertilizer money, which at this point would go beyond P1.2 billion, I think, considering the past of the Marcos wealth also dispersed," Pimentel said.

He added: "The reasons for the administration to help him go far beyond charity. I'm very sure that they have other motives in mind, like helping him maintain his silence, because if they reject him outright, he will have every reason to spill the beans on them."

DOJ opinion

Malacañang said the DFA have sought the opinion of the Department of Justice on the prospects of seeking Bolante's extradition, and was told that this was not legally feasible.

This is a memorandum to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that for an extradition request to prosper, Bolante should first be "charged with or convicted of any extraditable offense."

The Philippine Extradition Law (PD 1069) "presupposes that in any extradition request, there must be at least a pending criminal case filed in court or a crime and case already tried in court, in which there is the conviction of an accused," Gonzalez said.

That, before the Philippines formally seeks Bolante's extradition from the United States, "a criminal case must first be filed against him in Philippine courts," Gonzalez added.

But he warned that to do so would "not only be premature but also violative of the provisions of our treaty with the United States."

Gonzalez also said the Senate inquiry into the fertilizer fund scam and the issuance of an arrest warrant on Bolante must "not operate to criminalize one or the other accused in our law."

Rotary Int'l treasurer

Bolante, of the Rotary Club of Parañaque South, had been selected by the president of Rotary International (RI) to serve as its treasurer for 2005-06.

According to the RI website, Bolante attended its convention in Sweden and Denmark on June 13-15 and reported on the state of its finances.

His report is accessible on the Internet. With reports from Cil C. Cabreros-Garcia Jr. and Armand R. Nocum

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Vidal: I didn't join One Voice

By Jeannette Napallacan
and Jaime B. Bolanoy
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—CEBU ARCHBISHOP DE JESUS Cardinal Vidal denied yesterday the claim of One Voice movement that he has already signed the manifesto or joined the group, which aims to oppose the move to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative.

Cardinal Vidal, who arrived from Spain on Thursday, clarified in a statement he released yesterday that he only signed "in principle" on Monsod's request to facilitate a dialogue between One Voice and the Arroyo administration.

The purpose said he met Monsod last month because of his concerns, similar to those raised by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) in its July 4 pastoral letter, regarding the seemingly endless political wrangling in Manila.

But he said he did not sign any manifesto.

"While I agreed in principle with his request to facilitate a dialogue with all parties and sectors, including the administration, to help mobilize support for electoral reform and peaceful reform programs to address the crisis of economy at this point, I do not sign the contents of One Voice for the same reason that I would be facilitating the supposed dialogue with all the sectors," Cardinal Vidal said.

Vidal said he hoped that with the statement, the issue would be put to an end.

Vidal was attending the Fifth World Meeting of Families in Valencia, Spain when the report of his supposed involvement with One Voice came out in national newspapers, radio, Monsod meeting that the picture had indicated an intention to join the group in phone conversations with him.

"Through I do not wish to be identified with any group, I pray that the efforts of all well-meaning advocates across the political spectrum will enrich our democracy, inform our deliberations and lead our people to the right decisions about our current issues," he said.

Vidal also said he fully agreed with the pastoral statement of the CBCP issued on July 9 stating its concern about issues that currently embroil the Church and the country.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Bring him back

REACTING TO REPORTS THAT FORMER AGRICULture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante had been taken into custody by the US authorities in Los Angeles, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita brushed off suggestions that the government would rush to his aid. If the government is going to help at all, Ermita said, it would just be "the same assistance it would give any ordinary Filipinos." Ermita went on to explain why: "He is a private citizen.

EDITORIAL

If the government helps him, [people] will say Malacañang helped Bolante, so Malacañang is responsible for aiding Bolante."

If the Arroyo administration wants to make the Filipino people believe that it is doing right by Bolante, it should do more than just talk. As agriculture undersecretary, Bolante allegedly orchestrated the P728-million fertilizer scam that is said to have partly funded the campaign of President Maria Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the 2004 elections. He is the subject of a warrant of arrest that was issued after he had repeatedly ignored summonses to appear in the Senate hearings to shed light on the scam-ridden transactions. Until his arrest in Los Angeles, he had been playing hide-and-seek with the Filipino people, in much the same way as another infamous former official, Virgilio Garcillano. A Commission on Audit report submitted to the Senate provides a detailed documentation of the fertilizer scam.

Ermita says if he thinks people would believe the Palace had a hand in Bolante's disappearing acts only if it lands the latter out of the fix he's now in. The public has always suspected that Bolante, who is widely known as a close friend of First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo in the Rotary Club, was able to evade the long arm of the law on account of his Malacañang connections. Even former President Fidel V. Ramos, an ally of Ms Arroyo, said Bolante's disappearances were "damaging" to Ms Arroyo.

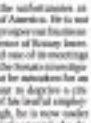
People cannot be blamed for having this perception. While Bolante was slipping in and out of the country, Malacañang (the seat of the executive department which is primarily responsible for the enforcement of Philippine laws), the National Bureau of Investigation, the Philippine National Police and the Bureau of Immigration were acting as if Bolante and the corruption charges against him were none of their business. Under Senate pressure, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez (a classmate of the President's husband) formed a task force to look into the fertilizer scam four months ago but nothing has come out of the investigations. It is clear that the administration's resistance of Bolante's case lacks the zeal and efficiency that Malacañang and law enforcement agencies exhibit when they go after "government destabilizers" and "true blues of the state."

Now Bolante is in the hands of the US government with whom the Philippine government has an extradition treaty. It should be much easier for the administration to bring him home and make him explain how he "supervised" the disbursement of the P728-million fertilizer fund. But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has said the Philippine government would ask for Bolante's extradition since it is our the obligation of the executive department to enforce a warrant of arrest issued by the Senate. Apparently to Gonzalez, the Senate is no longer a part of the Philippine government. But by refusing to lift a finger to bring Bolante home, he has only confirmed the public perception that Bolante is special to the Arroyo administration.

A few weeks ago, President Arroyo announced that she was putting P1 billion more into the government's war against graft and corruption. If the sincerity in a signal of her renewed resolve to stamp out corruption in government, this resolve will be put to a test by Bolante's arrest. She can score that campaign one big step forward by ordering the Department of Justice and the Department of Foreign Affairs to start the legal process that would bring Bolante back to explain where the P728 million went. But will she dare to hear what Bolante might reveal?

Good news and questions

SEPARATE OPINION



Isagani A. Cruz

THE BEST NEWS THAT MADE THE DAY FOR many of us this week was the arrest of Jocelyn Bolante on the limited bases for violation of an immigration law. He was arrested by the Senate for his refusal to attend the legislative investigation of the disposition of the 1728 million fertilizer fund, but he was soon nowhere to be found. The Senate immediately issued a warrant for his arrest, but he had already flown the country.

The administration took no pains to compel his return, apparently because it was color blind to that he was unavailable for close questioning. The real reason for the release of the fund intended for the benefit of the farmers might open a can of worms. The opposition is charging that the money had been spent instead for the election campaigns of President Macapagal-Arroyo, to buy votes and not fertilizers. The big people entrusted with the fund might have also diverted part of it to their own pockets as part of their share in the embezzlement.

The apologists of Malacañang have disclaimed any interest in their former colleague and have refused to hail him out for the measly sum of $100,000. This roughly translates to P5,200,000. Nevertheless, it is likely that the amount will be peanuts to some anonymous friend who will feel obligated to help Bolante, do for the identity of this open-handed patron, your guess is as good as mine—and we're probably both right.

One may wonder why the American authorities have taken special interest in Bolante's arrest, considering the incredibly high number of illegal aliens in that country. These include some thousands of Filipinos who have been staying there for years without incurring the burden of what we call TNTs (tago-nang ngo') from other lands that the Statue of Liberty has generously invited to "Give me your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores."

Bolante is not among the unfortunates attracted by the hospitality of America. He is not a "wretched refuse" but a prosperous businessman. He is an elected director of Rotary International who had to attend one of its meetings in Mexico for shipping the Senate investigators. He certainly could not be mistaken for an unemployed (but jobless) migrant looking for a job in the United States of his dreams of employment. We strongly enough, he is now under arrest on the relatively simple ground of a defect in his visa.

I am not complaining, in fact, I am happy that the American police have apprehended him. It's just that I can't help wondering why they have not been as efficient in locating other persons wanted by the Philippine government for various more serious offenses. Among them are Cesar Mancao for questioning on the murder of Bubby Dacer and his driver, and Yolanda Ricaforte in connection with the plunder case against Joseph Estrada.

I hope it is not true that our own agents will be sent to the United States to serve the warrant of arrest on Bolante and bring him back to the Philippines for swindle punishment. This is an ignoble contemplation. Their sole warrant of arrest has no legal force and our own policemen have no lawful authority in the United States without its consent. That is why we cannot arrest Nida Blanca's husband in Cal-

An attempted coup, nothing else

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

The final part of the statement leaves no doubt as to who will be in charge these (the AFP and the PNP—the elements which keep the country stable) days: "Let us [the AFP] continue to perform our duties as mandated by the Constitution ... In the hands of professionally competent, morally upright, patriotic, trustworthy and well-meaning Filipinos"—all chosen by you guessed it, Bolante.

In other words, they wanted to overthrow the government and take over themselves, bypassing not only the Constitution (which they were sworn to uphold and defend, mind you), but the people themselves (who are supposed to choose their leaders).

Why was this significant, one would have asked since claiming that Lim et al. did not have a coup in mind. But for those who still are not convinced, the Lupsi committee report should remove all doubts. The committee, officially called the Ad Hoc Investigating Committee, was created to inquire, among other things, into the alleged involvement/participation of military officers in the events of Feb. 19 to 26, 2006 that culminated in the "send-off" of the Philippine Marine Headquarters on Feb. 26.

With Brig. Gens. Ruben C. Lopez Jr. as chair, Maj. Gen. Ferdinand Bocobo as vice chair, the committee had six other members (Maj. Gen. Nilo Deypalubos, Brig. Gen. Jose Aden Bugtio Calimag, Colonels Candido Aquilat, Nicanor Soria, Cirilo Doroblas and Gumbocio Peraphael).

What does the report contain? First, it details the chronology of events. Next, it poses questions: the participation of the Philippine Marines (Querubin, Miranda et al.), starting from July 19, 2006, and the participation of Army and bring him back to the Philippines for prosecution as fast follies.

Also good news on another important matter was the revelation by seven bishops of the attempt to bribe them with envelopes containing thousands of pesos inconspicuously slipped in their pockets during the recent CBCP conference. On another occasion, three of these were offered checks from Pagcor, two for P500,000 each and the third for P200,000, which they all rejected. So was the cash secretly given to the other bishops, who also felt insulted.

The donors said that the gifts were intended even if they were supposedly intended for charity poor parishioners, to whom they should have been directly sent. The general feeling was that the real purpose of the proposed charity was to buy their support for issues favorable to President Arroyo, especially the dismissal of the new impeachment complaints against her.

The report has the ring of truth coming as they do from high officials of the clergy for the allies of the President tell it a "silent campaign" and "the devil's handiwork," with which they must be familiar. At any rate, some corrective can be effected but still undetermined.

Assessing the bishops' charges to be true, are their some of their who have accepted the donations and kept cautiously silent about them? Some of them might have been properly grateful. As for Bb Kuya's angry dismissal of the charges, we have further proof of their prince's innocence other than their mere denial of wrongdoing! This should not be enough in light of their previous established record of wrongdoing.

I hope these serious issues are elevated to the Supreme Court for its orderly ascertainment of the truth. And may they not be simply dismissed on the usual technical or procedural grounds to justify another convenient judicial cop-out.

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Lessons from Zidane fiasco: Keep cool

SOCCER AFICIONADOS FREE EDITO scanned last Sunday (Monday early morning in Manila) videos, quite suddenly, the French team captain and scorer Zinedine Zidane head-butted Italy's Marco Materazzi toward the closing minutes of the World Cup finals. As a result, Zidane was expelled from the game which was then deadlocked at 1-1. France lost the penalty shootout, 5-3. Later Wednesday, he said in interviews over French TV, Zidane explained why he did it: Materazzi provoked him repeatedly during the game, taunting his mother and sister.

Zidane's explosive act was very demoralizing for the French team, but it was also most tragic for the soccer superstar for his violent act came as he prepared to bow out of a most remarkable and celebrated career. He insisted that Materazzi ought to apologize for the latter's slur in a game being watched by billions of people around the world.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos has been mentioned by the Manila Bulletin for a while now, and his readers, including this columnist, always look forward to his weekly column and especially to his analyses. In a column last month, FVR noted that the World Gas Competition saw 22 countries of a global organization center in which member countries produce and export a part where a quarter of those gases. From the results of the qualifying rounds, he said, it was evident that the favored teams do not necessarily come from the global economic and political heavyweights, such as those "that are dominated by the United States, the World Cup included the likes of Brazil, Argentina, Italy, the Czech Republic, Ghana and Tunisia, proving that over the last 35 years, developing countries have not only successful as the developed nations, he said.

FVR noted this thought as a take-off point at the recent conference on "SP-IT: Business Opportunities & Challenges" sponsored in part by the Philippine Private Sector Development Plan. The theme was that the largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) for SP has been European firms in voice spaces, but the answers going into our country is still among the lowest in the Asian region. The Philippines could become more attractive, said FVR, if it could "transfer to and move out of the ranks of the uncompetitive and inefficient." But can SP do this? Ramos said this is like asking if SP can play in the World Cup considering it is not ranked by the world soccer body FIFA. Costa Rica walloped the Americans, 1-0, last June 13?

At the recent ASEU program I hosted with Gook Ateneo, Silvio Teig Jose Sabroda delivered the 2006 Philippine budget. The speech he made on the P1.09 trillion 2006 budget as "criminal." But he reasoned explained: (1) that Congress (the Blake of the Senate Andrews on Jr. by 24 and the submission by the Office of the President of the 2007 budget within the month of August, the 2006 budget could still squeeze through the bicameral conference committee and get the approval of Congress. Thanks to the cut made by the senators, the second regular session of the 13th Congress achieved with the two chambers deadlocked over the budget, so that government is now operating under a truncated budget. By the time it's over, the cutdown would probably reduce the deficit-to-GDP situation where two budgets would be debated.

Sabroda drove home a point missed by most that in effect, the budget cut made by the senators amounted to P120 billion. In he explained it, since the government is running on a truncated budget, the P62 billion in the 2006 budget when, tourism spending has already been spent and won't be replaced. Add this to the P66 billion cut from the 2006 budget and it becomes P130 billion that the government cannot use. Sabroda noted that among the items deleted by the senators are the local government fund called "Idlac Pacquet." For tell catchers, Jocelyn Pacquet is not the "Kampuan Senator" [who] which would inflate a P3-trillion livelihood fund to every barangay that is cleared of rebel infestation. Since 100 barangays are cleared by the military from this program which, ironically, was a brainchild of the "Team 16."

Also abandoned due to the budget cut, Sabroda noted, was the P1.7 billion project allocating one P1 million to each of the country's 1,700 public high schools. Each school district's needs, at a way of ensuring the high dropout rate partly caused by chronic hunger.

Sabroda explained that in previous years, the Arroyo administration prioritized redistribution of the large budget deficit, largely by tightening on spending and instituting fiscal reforms. But now, with increased revenues from the value-added taxation, the priority has shifted to increasing spending to spur real economic growth. He explained the direct relationship between spending and growth, stating that increased government spending last year was the leading factor for the 5 percent growth in the Gross Domestic Product. GDP growth of more than 5 percent means over 500,000 families rescued from poverty.

Sabroda noted, however, that despite increased infrastructure spending, 80% spending is still lower than that of its neighbors. A recent study put RP at No. 59 among 60 countries in terms of infrastructure. He also said that while the senators cut the huge item from the 2006 budget for fear that the administration would use it for politicking, they are hereby giving ammunition to the opposition by allies the poverty alleviation program. "Let's get our politics right and we'll get our infrastructure right," he said.

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

Politics is the problem

IN A PRESS CONFERENCE, LETGARDO BARRIO, named by the Philippine Normal University board of regents as its new president, said that he was willing to "reconcile with the school officials who had resigned from their administrative posts" after the BOR reaffirmed his appointment last week.

I am faced with four senior faculty members of PNU, three of whom were among the resigned administrative officials, earlier this week, and subsequently offered them my invitation. Barrio said. They had to say was: "What reconciliation?"

"What we're experiencing at the university these days is a counter-insurgency campaign," said one of the four, Dr. Rolando Gonzales, dean of the CAS. Instead, students who have been taking part in the protests have been surrounded. There is pressure being put on instructors/teachers to sign statements of support for Barrio. And our access to venues and even some of the usual spaces we use for meetings have been taken away," after the 38 officials resigned from their administrative positions, they added. Barrio immediately appointed officers in charge. Gonzales said that he will not work with the designated officials or teach a substitute.

At this point, though, say the faculty members, the only point of "reconciliation" they seek is for him to step down, or accept, as their protest pins put it, "the will of the people."

Actually, meeting with the four representatives of the protesting faculty presented real students of PNU was somewhat of a surreal experience. We met in the Faculty Center, the only such building open to us in "exile room". There we were, sitting on a coffee table, and decisively discussing the situation at PNU. It was like meeting with a group of school principals, actually though they looked more like professors, and some of them were formal dress quite than casual ones and lipped English.

THE FOUR stress that their protests and lobbying are aimed not only at getting Barrio to take a "graceful exit" from the PNU presidency but also to uphold a system of meritocracy within the academe.

"Not once has this happened" in over 100 years of the university's existence, they said. The turnover of PNU's leadership has always taken place in an orderly, lawful manner; that in this instance, they said, the BOR has clearly overstepped its authority, taking steps that were not established under its own rules and by-laws of state colleges and universities, so that, among other things, those institutions could be "more effective in the formulation and implementation of policies on higher education."

Moreover the academic freedom."

What has happened, instead is that the representatives sitting on the BOR, including that of the PNU, have acted in their positions in their capacities as "political leaders," said the professors. "Instead of freeing these institutions from politicizing the law has in fact increased it," said one teacher.

ALSOMOST, Bayan Muna Party-List Rep. Teddy Casiño and Akbayan Party-List Rep. Ella Bautista are expected to have submitted resolutions to the House committee on higher and technical education to look into the BOR's composition and review the Higher Education Modernization Act.

In a report, Casiño said he wanted the committee to look into the composition of the governing boards which have been "used by politicians to transform the academic into a huge playing field for patronage politics."

Under the law, the governing boards are each to be composed of the chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as chair, the president of the university or college, the chairs of the congressional committees on education and culture, the locals regional director, the regional director of the DOST or other relevant agencies, depending on the nature of the institution, the presidents of the faculty organizations, the presidents of the student councils, the presidents of the alumni associations, and two "prominent citizens" appointed by the private sector.

The trouble is that, given the number of state colleges and universities, the designated agencies and politicians often assign their own representatives to the boards. In the case of the legislators, various coalitions often sit in for them during meetings and deliberations.

* * *

PERCEI brings us to another point of contention. Do these representatives truly reflect the political thinking of their principals? Or do they vote according to personal beliefs, or perhaps merely accede to the lobbying of influential members of the board?

During the PNU deliberations, for instance, the board representatives sitting in the BOR have claimed that they had "no say in mind" when they arrived for the deliberations on the next president and relied mostly on the "three-minute interviews" that each candidate sat through. Where are the votes that were submitted with their principals before voting, they said they didn't need to.

While representatives of the academic community sit on the governing boards, they are closely outnumbered by politicians and government officials. This brings to question the priority given to purely academic considerations among these boards, especially since so many of the BOR members represent the views merely as assignment from their principals.

The law says that the president of a state institution should be appointed by the BOR "upon the recommendation of a duly constituted search committee." What was the deliberation now to where the BOR itself ignores the guidance of the search committee, and ignores the objective criteria for choosing the next president?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

The ungreening of the world

EVERYONE I MEET CLAIMS TO LOVE TREES—I mean really love trees—yet collectively the human race behaves as if it abhors green things. If you take a step back from whatever biome or ecological community you are in at the moment and look at the entire Earth and its forests through recorded history, you will see that the relationship between human beings and trees is the "Strangely Like War" (the title of a recent book on forest by Derrick Jensen and George Draffan).

The exact extent of the damage is difficult to discern, because for many years records were not kept, but the estimates are that 75 percent of the Earth's original forests have been logged or burned by humans. Some of them have grown back, of course, or have been replanted, but it is thought that we now have only half of the amount of forest land we once had on this planet.

In some places, particularly the drier places of the world, the deforestation is near or does not exist and was followed by such intense grazing that forests have not been able to grow back. The landscape has been permanently altered.

When you imagine Greece, Italy and Iraq, it is likely that you imagine a dry landscape with open grassy hills and few trees. Historical records indicate, however, that these places were once covered by dense forests. The forests fell as civilizations flourished, as the earlier cultures became "civilized" the sooner it became deforested.

This travels of so-called progress resulting in the destruction of forests is summed by John Bellamy in his 1993 book "Ill Forest Journey."

So today we sit on a planet with only 30 per cent of its forest cover remaining, and here's the part that should bring tears to your eyes: we continue to lose more than one per cent per year.

The most recent losses are well documented. Every five years, the United Nations produces a summary report called "Global Forest Resource Assessment." The team in charge of assembling the assessment relies on Internet reporting and satellite surveillance to come up with the figures. According to the most recent report, between 2000 and 2005, we lost forest acreage equivalent to the land mass of Panama—more than 77,000 sq km of forest gone; some of it never to return.

The next report is due to be released in 2010. I will not be surprised to read when it is released that the global trees loss has continued to shrink.

If this happens when we claim to love trees, I shudder to think what would happen if we were ambivalent about them. (It thought we could live without them.)

In the United States, deforestation began as soon as the colonists were settled. Before long, the colonists were exporting wood to the many nations that exchanged had the Golden they needed for ships, cattle, shingles and other construction materials. Trees were also used in charcoal, primarily for iron and the fledgling nation was using up its forests to build its own ironworks and railroads as well.

By 1920, more than three quarters of the original forests in the United States had been cut. Similar to the global figures, today the United States has only half the forest cover that it had in 1600. And we continue to destroy forest land.

At the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, it was agreed that "efforts should be undertaken towards the greening of the world." The UN recognizes that "forests are essential to economic development and all forms of life." But the UN Charter also reaffirms "states have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources." And so on.

Although the UN and its country recognize the value of forests, both ecologically and economically, such recommendations are not strong enough to impress local council from cutting "just a few trees" for their own use. Last week, I went to a zoning meeting in the town where I live. A real estate hoarding project developer wanted to cut many acres of trees so he could build houses. That forest land will be lost, probably forever, and a few more members will be added to the global deforestation statistics.

Why do local politicians, new towns all, allow so many trees from destruction? Why do humans all claim to love trees, but their actions deny their claim? I think it has to do with fear. When a would be regardless of trees stands before a politician and requests, demands, fights to clear a forest, the politician, out of fear, complies. But we do not fear trees. We do not fear their retaliation.

I have stood many despite our backyard. Perhaps that is one of the reasons we really love them.

But if we want to do more than have them, if we want to save them, we must become fearful. Project Syndicate

Joan Malouf is the author of "Reading the Trees: Lessons from the Forest." She teaches biology and environmental issues at Salisbury University in Maryland, USA.

WORLD VIEW

Joan Malouf

Smart or popular?

I KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO ARE NERDS IN SCHOOL, and they all tell the same story: There is a strong correlation between being smart and being a nerd, and as your younger you see an inclination between being a nerd and being popular. Being smart seems to make you unpopular.

Why? For starters, it's a self-evident thing that your name like an odd question to ask. The key to the mystery is to rephrase the question. Why don't smart kids make themselves popular? If they're smart, why don't they figure out how popularity works and learn the system just as they do the standardized tests?

YOUNG BLOOD

Daria Anne Q. Mendoza

We seem to know what the young are thinking about, what are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

In the schools I went to, being smart didn't matter much. Other kids didn't admire it or despise it.

So if intelligence doesn't boost one's popularity, why are smart kids so consistently unpopular? The answer, I believe, is that they don't want to be popular.

But if popularity had told me that earlier, I would have laughed at him. Being unpopular makes a kid's school life miserable. Some of the kids felt so miserable that they dropped out or, worse, hurt themselves. Telling me that I didn't want to be popular would have seemed like telling someone dying of thirst in the desert that he didn't want a glass of water. Of course, I wanted to be popular.

In fact I didn't; or I didn't want it badly enough. There was something else I wanted more, which was to be smart. And that meant not just doing well in school, though that counted for something, but also dumping powerful rocket, or writing well, or learning how to program computers. In general, thinking a lot about things.

I never tried to separate my wants and to weigh them against each other. If I had, I would have seen that being smart was very important. If someone had offered me the chance to be the most popular kid in school but at the price of having below-average intelligence, I wouldn't have taken it.

Much of their unpopularity is due to unpopularity. I don't think many nerds would either. But most kids would take that deal. For many of them, it would be a step up.

And that, I think, is the root of the problem. Nerds serve two masters: they want to be popular, but they want even more to be smart. And popularity is not something you can do in your spare time, not in the fiercely competitive environment of a secondary school.

The many reasons nerds are unpopular is that they have other things to think about. Their attention is drawn to books or the current world, not fashion and parties. While nerds are being trained to get the right answers, popular kids are trained to please.

Four-smart kids can spare the time that popularity requires. Unless they also happen to be good-looking, natural athletes, or siblings of popular kids, they tend to be nerds. And that's why many people are most miserable between the ages of 11 and 17. At that age, popularity seems to be all important. So much so, it might be the only subject in intermediate school and high school. Their other interests have them with little time to work on their popularity, and since it is a zero-sum game, the nerdiest those targets be the whole school.

Nerds who are still in school should not hold their breath, but maybe one day a heavily armed horde of adults might rescue them. Until then, they won't be very popular with nerds. Any immediate improvement in the nerds' lives is probably going to have to come from the nerds themselves.

Merely understanding the situation they're in should make it less painful. Nerds aren't losers. They're just playing a different game, a game that is much closer to the one played in the real world. It's not that they won't be successful adults; it's that they don't have to learn nerds in high school.

It's important for nerds to realize, too, that school is not life. School is a strange, artificial thing. Self-motivated learning is not. It's all-encompassing, like life, but it isn't the real thing. It's only temporary, and if they look, they can see beyond it even while they're still in it.

Daria Anne Q. Mendoza, 13, is a senior at the St. Mary Parochial School and editor in chief of their school paper.

Slowpoke

Gia C. Gutiral

DIFFERENT PERSONS BRINGS DIFFERENT MEANINGS TO certain words, and because of this, we cannot always connect similarity to people's perceptions of things and events.

"Slowpoke" is a word that has always been associated with me. At home, the people I live with notice the lethargic pace at which I perform minor chores or simple tasks. My parents always make it a point to remind me to follow their instructions, but they do so in the most encouraging tone. They are most concerned about my sluggishness because they believe that the dawdling or painstaking pace at which I perform some household chores is indicative of the slow rate at which I accomplish my duties beyond their sight.

I can understand their concern, and I have made it one of my lifetime goals to provide a little relief for their anxieties. As that, I have grown to appreciate and value their frequent reminders and constant nagging. Realizing that remaining a slowpoke would get me nowhere in a fast-paced and demanding society, I have promised to myself that I will clean, dust and do my chores at a faster rate in the near future.

My close friends are daily witnesses to my intense and slow nature. However, having known me for more than half of my life, they also know how awkwardly I have been battling my natural energy preservation. But no matter how much effort I exert to overcome it, it has always succeeded in manipulating me. Commuting to high school proved to be pure and simple assignments was my style as I went through high school. And I paid a hefty price for it. I had to stay up late when those things were due, which sometimes gave me severe migraines or colds or both. Nevertheless, be the time ahead of time, I was always running by the hall.

My friends have found new words to coin and struggle now to think my work quickly and do my responsibilities in fast as I can without sacrificing excellence. Like I said, this has been my goal and maybe if I persist and persevere I will achieve it yet.

Gia C. Gutiral, 19, is majoring in marketing at St. La Salle University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in, if employed, the company you're employed and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

RP justice system deserves a place in Guinness book

LETTERS

NOEL O. CRUZ, JR. (SEE ASIDE 5 robotics, let the cold sight on the head. Our justice system is the world's slowest, second to none, and should outlive any existing place in the "Guinness Book of World Records." May I add that our judicial process has also earned a place in "Ripley's Believe it or Not" as the only judicial system in the world where some of ethics is regularly disregarded by lawyers.

In fact, Filipino lawyers are considered to be the best legal technicians and "lawyers worked" who could fabricate anything under the sun...from some documents to decisions—as they work to absolve their clients from any responsibility.

Here is the only justice system in the world where Lady Justice is figuratively speaking, not in blindfold position in she holding a balanced scale. In the local setting, Lady Justice's hands have no sword however not certainly for divine guidance but for earthly blessings from the beneficiaries of recent decisions.

It is sad to note that millions of Filipinos are victimized by "court butcher" who fabricate complaints and judicial proceedings with impunity. In his speech during the oath-taking of new lawyers, Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban made it clear that he is really aware of this current social cancer.

So, let us adopt the jury system, justice is the basic law of democracy. Without a jury system, which mandates the direct involvement of ordinary folks in determining the truth on common-sense questions of fact brought before the courts, our democratic institutions will be very vulnerable to real democracy. With the jury system, we banish the process of an undemic justice delivery system which everyone can truly trust.

It's a pity that no one among our persons, senators and congressmen has expressed interest in legislating a jury system for our country. For more than two years now, we have been endeavoring such a network to share. Their silence and indifference to our proposal give us an impression that adopting the jury system, which will be patterned after the US model, will touch egotists dark interest as it will end their political advantage and control.

In there no one among the 80 million Filipinos who is prepared and audacious enough to pursue this advocacy? Must we all resign ourselves and submit to a corrupted judicial system that disposes cases after 30 to 50 years of dragging, that leaving basic cases to decide the parties, the judges and lawyers involved divorce?

Heaven help us!

—VIC DEL FIERRO JR., president, Coalition for Consumers Protection & Welfare Inc., 126 Camella St., Sorrel Living, Batasan Hills City

Doubts raised on abolition of death penalty

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's signing of the law abolishing the death penalty stands out to mark a crisis not with her all-out war against the Sons People's Army.

Perhaps, as a gesture of good will, she signed the bill to show to the whole world and Pope Benedict XVI that the Philippines, the biggest of two Catholic countries in Asia, abhors death penalty. But before that, she released an additional P1 billion to be used by the Armed Forces of the Philippines in its war against the NPA.

Whether or not it is at risk, this P1 billion will only favor the individuals with acquisitions-connections who not only from the ranks of the NPA, but also from the ranks of the military and ministers still now.

While I am for the abolition of the death penalty I cannot in conscience support the President's decision to carelessly spend an additional P1 billion to have more of her constituents killed. This move, of the President calls to mind a row of the dead in Baguio City—that the area was running for the presidency in 2004 to spare the nation from further divisiveness. But as it turned out, she broke her promise.

She "won" but Filipinos, generally, are not sure of the legitimacy of her victory due to alleged, massive cheating.

—ADOREMUNDO S. PITUELSR., 29 Land Street, Sauyo, Commonwealth, East, Caloocan Area North

Academic degrees do not a leader make

THIS IS IN REACTION TO THE supposed "favor" of the PAU (Philippine National University) community over the appointment of former Gov. Leopoldo Batao as its new president. What the PAU academic and officials (specifically those who favor resigned) don't seem to realize is that Bataho, indeed anyone else, is the least qualified for the job.

I am a native of Eastern Samar. I am currently studying in one of the universities here in Manila (not PAU). I am results-less Bataho, during his term as governor of our province, implemented selective and programs that brought in most improvements to our impoverished province.

That was about 10 years ago, and I was a kid then; nonetheless, I was, and still am, very much aware of the "improvements" and great leader because of his programs' tremendous impact on everyone's life. He spearheaded one of the most successful programs in curbing the activities of NPA rebels, he put an extensive campaign in our province by sustaining the citizens to return to the government's fold. And the list of his feats is a long one.

Why the ruling elite are not keen on fighting graft and corruption

IT IS COMMONLY KNOWN THAT Philippine politics has become the breeding ground for dynasties, dirt-ins and killers. It emphasizes that our leaders don't leave the political table in fighting graft and corruption in the country.

We miss realize that our values were corrupted in no time as all by our colonizers who imbued our social consciousness with the idea of "utang na loob" (debt of gratitude) to support our "independence" 50 years ago—with our leaders making deals with the colonial masters to ensure that they and their families will be able to remain in their spheres of power and to enlarge their wealth. The "deals," of course, enabled the Americans to continue influencing governmental decisions and exploit our natural resources.

How could we progress in our own country with foreigners handling in our affairs? Made under the cloak of friendship and alliance, the deals favored Americans to steal tremendous opportunities in our agriculture and trade industries. And now, Charter change, which is being unleashed, is the looming mark of American control over our people are being kept ignorant of the kind of leadership the elite provided our people under the "alliance."

But the alliance shows we have not learned our lessons in democracy...certainly not the kind our forefathers dreamed of—one that would have placed us on equal footing with the rest of the world. Remember that we had this chance when the Japanese evil in end the presence of American bases in the country for this came to naught because the elite would not be deprived of their fair for American-made goods. The elite's "American sense" is what the former administration has been accused of—Gloria's ties with the Visiting Forces Agreement.

What kind of nation are we if we no justice make our laws work for our people's good? Justice eliminates crimes. Poverty? It needs a progressive revised police officers would adversely affect business in the country. Who are they trying to elude?

Ultimate has always been the obstacle to the solution of our poverty problem. The government has no political will to fight graft and corruption because the cultivation and close mutually business and affairs are deeply rooted in it. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo says utang is the only solution to our problems because she wants us to forget our abuses and failures of her leadership.

Lets us forget, we are in this predicament because GMA has paid the generals in the military and police establishment—the "protectors of the people"—the latest political dishonors is that she can sell the world that she has everything under control.

Of course, there were other "economic" options, but what we have used here is enough to show that we are self-destructing because the bad leadership and the hedonistic tendencies we acquired under the "alliance" have made us lose our moral vision.

—ERNESTO S. MACPITI, ernestomacpiti@yahoo.com

Accidents waiting to happen in Edsa-Ayala tunnel

AS A CONCERNED CITIZEN, I'M realizing the intention of the government authorities concerned to two perpendicular walls that provide the South-bound lane of the Edsa-Ayala tunnel. The walls pose a danger to motorists and, are surprisingly they have caused accidents. Official records show the following:

1. In 2004, there were 71 accidents in that area. One of those involved in the death of one person, in six other cases, six people suffered physical injuries.

2. In 2005, there were 53 accidents. Seven of those involved in the death of one person, in six other cases, six people suffered physical injuries.

3. As of June, January and June of this year, there were 55 accidents.

In other words, more than a hundred accidents happened in the past two and a half years resulting in death, physical injuries and damage to property. Still continuing.

We were told that the tunnel was designed by a Japanese contractors. The cost of modifying the tunnel must be charged to him and he must be forever barred from getting involved in any project in this country from now on. He should be held responsible for the numerous heavy structures and all the harm it has caused.

The Metro Manila Development Authority, the City of Makati, the Department of Public Works and Highways and Congress should act on this matter very quickly. The deficiency designed tunnel must be modified immediately to make it safe. If it high time that we put safety as an essential to the safety of the public. Safety is everybody's concern.

I am also calling on the media, particularly the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, the Inquirer, Chit Samaco, Inc., "balasan agaton," "Balat," etc. to look into this issue.

Let us not wait for the next accident to happen.

—ROSITO C. LEBRON, former provincial board member, Batangas

GSIS sincere in helping pensioners?

IN HER RESPONSE TO THE LETter of Bernardo Bello, we learned to weather GSIS monthly pensions to the present economic realities. (PDI, 6/24/06). Ella Valenzuela, vice president for public affairs of the Government Service Insurance System, only succeeded in causing more question about the GSIS' sincerity in extending to its pensioners' plight.

She pointed out that the GSIS has shown genuine concern for the pensioners by increasing pensions every year and then under its new policy the pensions cap on old age pensions has been lifted so that retirees can now receive monthly pensions up to 90 percent of their last salary, plus economic and financial incentives that's true for recent retirements only.

What about the vast majority of pensioners who had retired much earlier? Their retirement benefits were initially based on their meager monthly compensations in the last three years prior to their retirement—considered adequate then but very low by present day standards. Time, the GSIS grew annual increases, but such increases can hardly be felt nowadays.

Upon the request of many pensioners, I sent a letter to GSIS president Winston Garcia to ask him to do something for them. I received his acronym on Dec. 6(4) of the 1974 (Expanded Senior Citizens Act) which clearly mandates that the "retirement benefits of retirees from both the government and private sectors shall be regularly reviewed so as to [illegible]

All his statements show that as a leader, he led a frugal and simple life, unlike some, if not most, of our past and present local officials who celebrate to enjoy luxurious and extravagant lifestyles. He has proven himself to be the quintessential paragon of honor and decent governance...he accorded the people's trust in public service during his tenure. And I would say this with confidence because of the kind of local governance we ever had.

After his term as governor, he held various governmental positions, and since then he has remained a very popular figure more than worth follow, the former secretary during President Estrada's impeachment trial, who took study particularized his duties until the discovery and issuance of that pardoning.

All this I am telling the world, and the PAU community in particular, not because I am a big political supporter of Bataho. All this is because I believe that everybody is entitled to his/her deserved credits and appliances to his or effective leader.

—CHRISTOPHER BUENAVENTURA, Bagalangit, Eastern Samar

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

FLORITA'S FLOOD
Heavy rain caused the overflowing of the Maranding Bridge in Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan.

Evacuees return to burned homes

COTABATO CITY—SOME RESIDENTS FROM AT LEAST FIVE Maguindanao towns, who fled days of hostilities between militiamen controlled by Gov. Andal Ampatuan and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels, have started to return home, a Catholic priest working for the evacuees, said on Friday.

But many of them have no more houses to return to because these were razed during the clashes, according to a statement released by government agencies, the MILF and the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT).

At least 227 houses were burned during the intense fighting based on government data furnished reporters here.

MILF councilor-commander Abdullah Mac-ad Mag said the government should help rebuild the houses so that returning civilians would have something to live in.

"It's a picture of compassion; we still see [the government] is contradictorily help those civilians who left their destroyed homes," ad Mag said.

He said even with food and other assistance given evacuees, of those still preferred to live in their own homes.

Fr. Bert Layson, OMI, of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus, agreed by saying those who lost their homes were now living and sleeping in makeshift structures along the Tiliganduan-Simuel-Sultan Sabbarin main road considered evacuation centers.

Layson said those who still have

INQUIRER Visayas

E-mail: [redacted]

Editor Jon Barahayel
News Chief Efraim L. Benedicto

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

It's time to talk, says Macho

By Alex Pal
Antique's City

I T USED TO BE A FEMALE-DOMINATED SUBject matter but now, more and more men are getting interested in it.

A group calling themselves the Men Advocates and Champions for Responsible Health Options, or Macho, a group of concerned men and male advocates of reproductive health in Negros Occidental, is gaining popularity in the province.

The group is led by Ayungon Councilor Arnulfo Acabal, 24, with the municipal health officer, Dr. Irving Dingcong, as advisor.

"I don't care if I lose votes. We have left the issue of family planning to women for a long time. It's time men talked to men about reproductive health," Acabal told a group of men in Tanjay City in one of their recent forums.

Acabal cited studies showing that women had an unmet need for family planning. One survey showed that while most women only wanted one or two babies, they ended up having more because they did not know how to manage their reproductive health.

"Our mission is to talk to men of the need to plan families with their wives," he said.

Members of Macho, organized by the province's population office in November last year, are actively engaging other husbands to cultivate interest and clout.

To date, they number 20, including evangelist group, a municipal councilor, and providents of non-government organizations and people's organizations in the towns of Ayungon, La Libertad, Siaton and Canlaon[illegible].

Acabal attributed the success of his group's creation [illegible], such as the adoption of a common homebound attitude with the Roman Catholic Church and the strong support of the local leaders.

For politicians, population issues are not there is a bind. Tanjay Mayor Ildefonso Juliana told the forum that politicians control their votes to increase, but as responsible individuals, they did not want the populations to grow rapidly.

Juliana said he was happy to note that men were becoming more open in talking about reproductive health.

"Tanjay has a strong reproductive health program and we received awards for this program, but most of those who attend our forums are women," he said.

Provincial population officer Annette Villarin said the Macho's ability to discuss reproductive health issues had improved with every forum.

Dingcong said the men were now more interested in family planning by virtue of the impending pullout of foreign support for the fund, by [illegible] program for the Philippines. By 20 years, the Philippines has been supplied with foreign support for contraceptives and this will end in 2007, except for the supply of the intrauterine device (IUD), he said.

He encouraged local government officials to outreach funds for the supply of family planning commodities in their areas.

National initiative

However, a noted economist has pointed out that while there may be successful population management initiatives in some towns and cities in the country, the initiative for a population management policy should come from the national government.

Prof. Ernesto Boyle of the University of the Philippines' School of Economics said local government units should have any initiative to implement such a program because a decrease in population could also mean a decrease in their Internal Revenue Allotment and in the number of voters.

Speaking in a recent forum on poverty, population, growth and overfishing by friends organized by the Path Foundation Philippines and the Integrated Population and Coastal Resource Management (Ipopcorm), Boyle said it was time the national government came to an understanding with the Church on the related need for a sound population policy so other leaders [illegible] to other Catholic countries.

There can be no real development in the Philippines unless the government addresses the population issue, he said.

Good family planning programs have been established for the economic growths of Thailand and Indonesia, countries that once lagged behind the Philippines.

According to Boyle, Thailand's poverty incidence has fallen 6.9 percent and Indonesia to 16.2 percent, in contrast to the Philippines' 30 percent. In the case of Indonesia, where governance and corruption ratings were reported to be worse than that of the Philippines, it shows that a good population policy by itself can contribute to significant poverty reduction, he said.

Ukraine, Iloilo theater groups foster ties

UKRAINIAN actor and actress Maryia Rakhlei with fellow student Kateryna Savenkova sign autographs and leave art with their Ilonggo counterparts after the closing ceremony of the "Theater for All: Workshop of Drama Schools" at the University of San Agustin grounds on May 19, 2006.

By Hazel F Villa
Iloilo City

> The stage has always been the public story. The director's hand, the rhetoric I put into play, the way that lovers phrase, mean pleasure to live.
> —Prologue at the Opening of Dream Lover by Samuel Johnson

DESPITE HAVING COUNTRY IS never lacking for theater and drama workshops, nor could its citizens claim a dearth of quality plays and cultural shows that are a draw a dozen here any time of the year.

Such is the sober state of Ilonggo theater that it takes something different to make drama students and patrons, thespians, and culture aficionados take notice and back. That was exactly what they did when the Kazanskiy Kiev State National University of Theatre, Cinema and Television (KSU) came to Iloilo all the way from Kiev, Ukraine.

The KSU participated in the "Theater for All: Workshop of Drama Schools," a cultural exhibition, drama workshops, and culture enthusiasts' forum conducted by the University of San Agustin-based Theater Institute (TI) World Congress.

The workshop carried the theme, "Innovative Roots to Show Artistic Routes of Expressions: Mobilizing Cultural Diversity to Achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals."

The Unesco ITI World Congress, participated in by 11 countries including the Philippines, was held in Manila on May 20-29, in conjunction with the UN Celebration of Culture for Diversity and Development Week.

Part of the training delegates' activities was to hold workshops, give product performances, and exchange insights with local theater groups and school-based groups in a Philippine city where they are assigned.

Special attraction

In Iloilo City, the 16-member delegation of the KSU was the special attraction of the May 18-19 drama workshop conducted by the University of San Agustin, the city government and the Technical Committee for Culture and the Arts.

The visitors performed "The Lesson" by Eugene Ionesco and "Hamlet" by Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, better known as Moliere, at the university's Conference Room.

It was Hamlet that transcended barriers. Though they were speaking in Ukrainian, the Ilonggo understood the story line because of the excellent acting, considering that the KSU, or its brochure said, has had more than 40 awards in different national and international art events and festivals in the past decade.

"The movements were so studied that it was easy to follow the story. "The Lesson" was in the genre of the Theater of the Absurd, but the way they did it [illegible] was just stunning," said JP Libosan, 27, an Ilonggo actress and director who is the current toast of local theater circles for her **masterfully directed and popular productions.**

Theater teacher and director Sylwia Hrabia-ganza, one of the workshop organizers, said the Ukrainian actors' performances was beyond his expectations. At their age [illegible] 20s], "they manifested skillful production and expertise in handling their characters as well as the effective use of body, voice and emotions," he said.

"The actors' voices are trained to be as human as with their body movements and also in contrast with the body. The effect is impressive message," added Libosan.

Heading the KSU group were Prof. Oleksiy Bilogan, associate dean, and Yuriy Akerskiy, a teacher.

The Ukrainians also held sessions that mostly focused on the finer points of acting and the use of the voice and body movements as related to acting.

Aside from the delegation's heritage and museum tours, the KSU group went to the University of the Philippines in the Visayas where they were guests of the Miagao [illegible] and Ilonggo-Panayanon culture.

Brilliant future

The delegation also conducted performances for the Little Theater of the University of San Agustin, Teresa Arellano of the Iloilo National High School Special Program for the Arts, and the Tauro Dreams of the Western Institute of Technology.

What did they think of the Ilonggos and their first visit to the Philippines?

"Our stay here is very pleasant. It is a pleasure to meet the youth in very open-minded students. The students were an inspiration and the people are ready to accept the stage," said Oleg Tsvetayev, 20, one of the KSU actor students.

The 54 student-participants to the workshop were comfortable bantering and chatting with their guests who kept follow student and foundation Maryia Rakhlei, 21, busy interpreting for the Ilonggos and her compatriots.

There was much applause during the open forum after the performances of "Hamlet" on the last day of the workshop was the invitation of the KSU to organize Iloilo Ilonggo to pursue his/her master's degree in their university.

UKRAINIAN actors Dikka Chervonenko and Kateryna Savenkova of the Kazanskoi-Kary Kyiv National University of Theater, Cinema and Television from Kiev, Ukraine perform "Hamlet" by French dramatist Moliere at the University of San Agustin Conference Room, Iloilo City.

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GOLD ENCRUSTED microbe commonly attached to a gold flake as seen through a scanning electron microscope.

Midas touch: Bacteria can turn dust to gold

From page A1

US-based magazine Science suggest a bacteria known as Bacillus megaterium may play a key role in forming gold nuggets and grains.

A group of scientists led by German-born researcher Frank Reith collected gold grains from two Australian mines more than 3,000 kilometers apart, and discovered that 86 percent of the grains had the bacteria living on them.

"What we found out suggests that bacteria can accumulate this gold," Reith told The Associated Press in a telephone interview from his Australian office on Friday.

Reith said Bakterien noid-lebenden act as microscopic gold scrubbers, soaking up heavy metals in their dissolved form and concentrating them into tiny nuggets, added Brown.

"Heavy metals are toxic, not only to us but also to microorganisms, in elevated concentrations," he said.

"It appears to be that the organisms can detoxify its immediate environment of this toxic metallic gold and in this way gain a metabolic advantage," he said. "That's why it would be prisms on those gold grains."

Many scientists have questioned the possible microbial role in forming gold, maintaining it is unclear how gold grains were either remnants of larger pieces or formed through chemical processes.

Can't create gold

Reith said his findings provide the strongest evidence yet that bacteria could play a key role in creating solid gold, although the exact mechanism is not yet known.

"What we just wanted to show is that microorganisms are capable of contributing to the formation of gold nuggets and grains that were always doubted," Reith said. The stir saying that the organisms are the only way how gold nuggets in soils are born, but it's one of the ways."

But home-dictionaries be warned, pouring a bucket of Bacillus megaterium on your backyard won't create a gold mine.

"You have to have gold there first. If you don't, bacteria can't create gold," Reith said. AP

'Nicole's' 'cross' done in 40 minutes

From page A1

Jaramillo told reporters that the defense panel's task was not necessarily a sign of overconfidence. "To take a case, you don't really rely on cross-examination but on the strength of your own evidence," he added.

Private prosecutor Evalyn Ursua expressed relief that Nicole's "ordeal" was "brief" and the cross-examination was "surprisingly gentle."

"They were not able to impeach Nicole...and that means her testimony was not destroyed," Ursua said.

"And that's very significant because they were not able to destroy (our) witness today," she stressed. And when the defense fails to impeach a witness' testimony, that means the court should accept [the testimony] as weighty," she said.

Ursua said the prosecution had expected the defense, or at least the counsel of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, to grill Nicole intensely given her close testimony on what the 21-year-old soldier had allegedly done to her.

"That was why we did not have any problem with Nicole testifying. We thought the cross-examination would spill over to next week ... Maybe they just could not get anything out of our client," she said.

Credibility

Only Patricio Bautista, who initiated his father Benjamin to defending Smith, questioned Nicole, mainly to test her credibility by as well as her memory of the night of Nov. 1, 2005, when the alleged rape occurred.

But Bautista admitted, not the alleged crime, but how Nicole purportedly got herself drunk at the Subic Star Freeport's Neptune Club, where she first met Smith on the fateful night.

The lawyer also brought up Nicole's having at the time an American boyfriend named Brian Goodrich—also a US Marine based in Okinawa—and, at one point, asked her if she had buttered a "dossier" of going to the United States.

"It's not really a dream. I just want to live with my fiance," Nicole said.

Bautista also made her admit that she did not tell her boyfriend that two other US servicemen—Navy PO2 Oliver Christopher Mills and a Corbet Orozco—were paying for her and her siblings' lodgings when they all took a vacation in Subic.

Nicole previously said that Mills and Orozco—whom she described as family friends back in her native Zamboanga City—invited her and her two sisters to Subic, and that Mills gave them money to use as casino and also paid for their drinks at the Hospitality.

Bautista also asked Nicole to remember how many minutes passed between her consumption of the six different alcoholic drinks that made her "dizzy."

'Why would I bother?'

But Nicole said she would not know because she did not bother to count the minutes.

"Why would I bother? Sir were drinking and I didn't care about the time," she said in Filipino.

Bautista further probed: If Nicole really got that drunk on that night, would she remember collapsing on the floor? Did she need help to walk straight?

"I don't know" was Nicole's reply to both questions.

But Bautista was forced to withdraw certain questions upon the objections made by Ursua, with Judge Pecson upholding her.

In one question that Ursua successfully objected to during, prosecutor tried to establish that Nicole "went straight" to removing an affidavit on her alleged rape in Subic's Intelligence and Investigation Office because she got "angry" with the friends Olivarez other took her at the casino in the former Gordon Memorial Hospital in Olongapo City.

By Nicole's earlier account, that doctor assured in her rape story and remarked that "maybe she liked it." She also recognized that the doctor attended to a pregnant woman first although Nicole, her sister and their driver were got in the hospital much earlier.)

Ursua argued that there was "no connection" between the two episodes—and Pecson agreed.

Bautista even asked Nicole what "language" her American boyfriend spoke.

The question not only caused Pecson himself to ask what was its relevance, but also drew chuckles from Nicole's supporters in the gallery.

10 hours

"If I were my client who was grilled down, my cross-examination would have taken 10 hours. If it were my client, 30 minutes or an hour of cross-examination would not be enough," Ursua said, pointing out that the defense did not even touch on Nicole's testimony on what had happened inside the rented house's van.

Testifying on direct examination, 21-year-old Nicole had described Smith as the man who lured her out of the karaoke bar and raped her while she was dead drunk inside the moving van.

She had told the court that Smith kissed her on the lips and neck and caressed her chest even while she struggled.

While she had no memory of the actual intercourse, Nicole had said she confirmed the rape after she found her panty on its reverse when she regained consciousness on the paramedic where she suddenly had allegedly clamped her, and when she felt pain in her genitals after the efforts of alcohol had dissipated.

Because Nicole's testimony remained intact despite the cross-examination, Ursua no longer conducted redirect examination.

Clarifications

It was Judge Pecson who made some clarifications with Nicole.

First, he asked why she was, plaintiff was weak at the time she stood up from the van. Nicole answered, "Because I had not had the repeatedly acted but failed to push Smith away as he pinned her down on the seats seat with his weight.)

"I was already drunk at that time, and my body was losing strength," Nicole said.

Pecson then tried to see if the complainant remembered what happened between the time Smith was hitting and touching her inside the van, as she had testified, and the time she found herself with her pants down, from side back.

"I don't know. All I know is that my pants were already on in reverse that time," said Nicole, referring to the time strangers found her at Subic's Alava Pier, where the soldier allegedly dumped her before ducking to their ship, the USS Essex, docked nearby.

The judge then asked Nicole about her "screw she heard inside the van during Smith's alleged assault: "Were you able to tell where the voices were coming from?"

Nicole: "No. I was not able to notice that because I was struggling."

Pecson: "You said you heard music. Do you know where the music was coming from?"

Nicole: "I don't know. All I know is I heard some music."

'In what manner?'

The judge then focused on the alleged sexual assault: "You said Smith touched your breasts (while in the van). In what manner did Smith [do that]?" Pecson asked the complainant.

Nicole: "I don't remember, sir."

Next, Pecson asked if Nicole remembered the manner with which Smith, as she had alleged, forced kisses on her lips and neck while she struggled.

Nicole: "All I remember is that he kissed me."

Pecson then asked Nicole about what she told the Supreme's security guard when she returned to the bar to look for Smith after the alleged rape.

"When you told the guard that Smith did something bad to you, what is that you were referring to?" Pecson said.

Nicole: "Rape. I just could not tell the security guard at the time because I was ashamed. I am not proud to tell people that I was raped."

Filipina driver

For their 15-minutes, Ursua said, the prosecution will present next week Tinnose Serrano, the Filipina driver of the hired van.

Serrano will corroborate Elizabeth Mendal said that contrary to earlier reports, Serrano had not "actually gone into hiding."

Serrano has figured prominently in the case during the preliminary investigation, when he submitted an affidavit recanting his original statements to the DFA and claiming he was only coerced by an investigator into mentioning "gang rape" in the first document.

Oil price nears $80 ...

From page A1

bank Calyon. "In the end, geopolitical risk is about a current supply disruption getting worse or your you happening."

Dealers said oil prices now looked set to break $80 soon, with the upcoming September contract already quoted at above $78 in the market operators on a series of geopolitical concerns from the Middle East to North Korea.

Oil prices continued to climb, light sweet crude for delivery in August, was quoted at $77.35 per barrel, up $1.23 from its most recent settlement of $76.70 in New York.

Oil prices pushed higher still to hit an all-time high of $78.40 in after-hours electronic trade before some profit-taking took it off the top.

Brent North Sea crude for August delivery was at $77.78, just off its high of $77.76.

"It seems like hitting $80 a barrel is inevitable," said Victor Shum, a Singapore-based analyst with energy consultancy Purvin and Gertz.

"We're in uncharted territory, it is a result of a confluence of a number of geopolitical events in a tight market that drove healthy demand growth.

"The factors are getting together in a right market, and we haven't even got out first hurdles in this US hurricane season, so pricing is going to continue rising."

Shum said oil at $100 a barrel "is still quite a bit off from where we are today. I don't think is certain by the present tie it is to hit that."

Local conditions

"In the Philippines, some prices are one of projections, like services of electricity and some utilities," Dina said. "The is worrisome if charges translate to the disregarding of workers' salaries many wages."

Dina said the upturned in oil prices would not unduly raise local electricity prices since a large portion of power supply was generated using hydroelectric resources like natural gas, water and geothermal energy.

Donald G. Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the oil price surge was not an unusual considering that unrest in the Northern Hemisphere was approaching.

Dee said that at times like these, businesses usually took the usual actions to adjust, that is, on limited basis increasing the prices of goods and services and asking losses.

"But we hope that global oil prices stabilize because we are hurting at that time," he added.

Transport sector

Jesus L. Arranza, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries, said the rise in prices of oil did not necessarily mean a great increase in the prices of local commodities since transport expense was not a substantial part of production costs.

"What we are worried about is if this would be reflected in electricity prices although we do not expect this," Arranza said. "The increased use of hydropower plants during the rainy season should compensate for the oil price surge."

He cited a recent announcement from the National Power Corp. that it would use fewer prices because it would be using its hydropower plants more.

"We hope distribution utilities like the Manila Electric Co. would bring more supplies from Napocor and immediately reflect lower prices in their billings," Arranza said.

But the transport sector and economists, already battered by the almost weekly increases in the prices of fuel products, face unwelcome additional charges.

According to Felder Odilo of the Department of Energy Oil Industry Management Bureau, local prices increase about 31 to 20 centavos per liter for every dollar increase in the price of the region of benchmark Dubai crude.

The means that with local prices of gasoline ranging from P41.20 to P43.55 per liter, a dollar increase in Dubai oil prices would push prices up to P41.61 to P43.9. Current diesel fuel prices ranging from P33.79 to P37.78 will increase to between P36.1 and P36.1 per liter.

No oil shortage

Qatari Oil Minister Abdullah al-Attiyah said there was no shortage of crude oil in world markets, also blaming geopolitical tensions for the surge to current high prices.

"The main thing is that we see that there is no shortage in the market at all," he told reporters. "Speculators are using the geopolitical situation to their benefit and we are seeing how the oil prices are soaring."

Qatar is the smallest producer in Opec. The 11-member group has been powerless to tame officially at rising world demand has eased up much of the group's reserve production capacity.

In Nigeria, two suspected explosions at a crude pipeline operated by Agip, a unit of Italy's big, caused oil spills. Nigerian officials said this denied reports of sabotage and extensive oil spills and said damage was limited.

Seven Dutch-Shell Plc has already had to shut down 470,000 barrels per day of Nigerian supply, almost a quarter of output in Africa's top oil supplier, due to attacks by rebels.

Dozens of civilians were killed Thursday as rebels join pounded Lebanon in retaliation for the capture and killing of Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah guerrillas, igniting fears of a wider Arab-Israeli conflict. Reuters, AFP and Bernard Dominguez

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PRC admits leakage in nursing exams

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THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATION COMMISSION has admitted that there was a leakage of test questions in the June 2006 Nurses Licensure Examination and blamed two members of the Board of Nursing for the leaked questions.

In a statement, PRC chair Leonor Tirpen-Bowers said its fact-finding committee has traced the link to the manuscripts of two Board of Nursing members which PRC did not identify.

Nurses said the two erring board members would be penalized and administrative charges would be filed against them.

"This leakage is regrettable and the case referred to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for its own investigation and determination of all the persons and parties involved and their prosecution under the law," Bowers said.

The leakages in the nursing exams were first exposed by Baguio nursing graduates who saw photocopies of an 18-page document that contained hundreds of test questions and answers.

Photocopies

The photocopies were distributed by the R.A. Gaspul Review Center to its nursing licensure applicants, who had shared their copies with some of the complainants.

Dozens of nursing schools in Baguio City and 93 of their graduates are seeking the suspension of the nursing board members and licensure test results until an independent fact-finding body can unearth alleged irregularities in the exams.

Nursing school deans of St. Louis University (SLU), Easter College and the University of the Cordilleras (UC) on Friday said they have evidence linking other review schools to the licensure exam leakages.

They urged the PRC to immediately rule evidence implicating the two nursing board members to a then credible and independent investigative body.

Deans Maria Grace Lazaro'a (SLU), Ruth Thelma Tinpda (Easter College) and Norvida Dan-ayen (UC) said the investigating body should include members of the Philippine Nurses Association, NBI, the Association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing and the PRC.

The PRC has asked the Board of Nursing and officials of the R.A. Gaspul Review Center to respond to the complaints on Tuesday.

Leakage

As Oni developed, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration warned that the leakage in the nursing exams could taint the credibility of entire government-sponsored testing system and affect the image of all Filipino professionals going out of the country.

POEA chief Rosalinda Baldoz said that as a result of the scandal, the government's lobbying to host the National Council Licensure Examination for Prenical Nurses of the United States has been experiencing difficulties.

"We're not being favorably considered to host the NCLEX due to alleged forgeries and fraud in the licensure examinations. This has tainted the credibility of our nursing [board] exams," Baldoz said. With reports from Fincent Tabiyas, JOS Northern Luzon Bureau and Jerome Aning in Manila

Mayon Volcano spews lava; alert up

LEGAZPI CITY—MAYON VOLCANO yesterday suddenly spewed torrents of lava, prompting the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology to raise to 3 the alert level around the volcano.

Volcanologist Edmundo Laguerta said alert level 3 means there was a slight potential of eruption that could affect areas within the 6-km danger zone.

He said the spewing of detached fragments, or lava, was technically considered a silent eruption that could affect the foothill areas of Daraga, Legazpi, and Camalig.

"But there's nothing to worry about since it would take days or weeks before a major eruption will happen. It will remain at alert level 3 as long as the [spewing of] these particular detached fragments of lava continues," he said.

Mayor Noel Rosal immediately went to the affected villages to monitor the situation. Gil Pretcia G. Arevalo, PIN Southern Luzon Bureau

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PNU teachers, studes accuse school officials of harassment /A20

Atienza aide suspect in driver's slay

Minor traffic dispute led to shooting, say witnesses

By Tina G. Santos

AN ASSISTANT OF MANILA MAYOR LITO Atienza is being hunted by the police for allegedly killing a jeepney driver Wednesday night in Tondo.

Supect Jose "Noli" Sugay, who, Atienza admitted was one of his special assistants at City Hall, allegedly killed Aries Lavis, 27, of Local Street, Tondo, over a petty traffic disagreement.

Atienza said he ordered the police yesterday to investigate the incident. "I told Manila Police District director Chief Supt. Nelio Bulaong I wanted a thorough and impartial probe of what actually happened," Atienza said.

The mayor added Sugay should present himself to the police to answer the allegations.

"As of now, there have been no complaints filed against him. These are all just accusations aired in the media. Pero dapat na siyang magpaliwanag bago pa siya sampahan ng kaso, kaya sa sigayon na nakatakdaang sa ang pangalan niya, iyong mga kasalukuyan siya harapin niya," Atienza added.

An investigation showed the incident happened around 8 p.m. at the corner of Local and Dagupan Streets where the suspect's and the victim's vehicles were parked.

Witnesses said Sugay, who was reportedly riding a friend and was accompanied by a bodyguard, got irked that Lavis's jeepney was blocking his car, a Toyota Fortuner (XXXX 780).

Sugay, who reportedly introduced himself as a policeman, and Lavis got into a heated argument. The suspect allegedly pulled out a gun and shot Lavis in the head.

The victim died while undergoing treatment at the hospital, police said.

Chief Insp. Wenjunlito Nuqueling, chief of the MPD Homicide Division, said a team was dispatched to arrest the suspect who, according to City Hall employees, had not reported for work since Thursday.

Police said relatives of the victim, particularly the mother who reportedly witnessed the incident, had yet to give their statements to authorities.

City Hall insiders, who refused to be named, said Sugay, reportedly the son of the secretary in Manila Mayor Antonio Villegas in the 1960s had figured in several unpleasant incidents in the past. They also refused to deny or confirm if the suspect was the same Noli Sugay, identified in news reports in the past as Atienza's special assistant and Lakas party member, who had been accused of manhandling his alleged victims.

Displaced settlers ask for more time

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SITTION

This was the appeal of residents of Sitio Ayala, Malabon City to the owner of the 5.8-hectare piece of land they had been occupying since 1966 not to continue demolition efforts in the area for the meantime.

Tension gripped the community of informal settlers yesterday when at least 50 men arrived unannounced in the area and told residents that they would put up a blockade around the property supposedly owned by one Francisco Cuevas.

The residents, displaced by a fire that broke out on Monday, are now living along Governor road beside a creek that had overflowed because of heavy rains spawned by typhoon "Gloria."

"What we are asking for is a proper relocation site before we are displaced again," said their leader Salvacion Cielo.

Witnesses in Makati slay urged to come forward

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE SHOOTING OF A MAKATI PUBLIC SAFETY officer on Wednesday morning remains a puzzle as no witness has come forward so far.

Makati police chief Senior Supt. Marieto Taboria said yesterday no one had come forward to shed light on the shooting of Petronio Enriquez.

The victim worked as an investigator of the Makati Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Cooperation

"I am seeking the cooperation of witnesses, especially colleagues of the victim, because they would play a big role in solving this case," Taboria told the Inquirer yesterday.

Around 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Enriquez, a resident of Barangay Cembo in Makati City, was waiting for a ride on A. F. Reyes Street in Barangay Rizal when three unidentified armed men shot him dead.

Taboria said there were many witnesses as the incident happened when people were on their way to work.

He added the police were considering two possible angles behind the slaying.

Taboria, however, said it could have something to do with a family problem.

Job-related?

Another angle they were looking into was that it could be related to Enriquez's job as law-enforcement.

Enriquez handled mostly traffic violations cases, police said.

The police chief said investigators would also look into a possible link between the slaying of Enriquez and the shooting of former barangay council member Ildefonso Pesaquero in March.

Three unidentified assailants were also involved in the earlier incident.

Cop arrested for death of colleague

By EJ Dy

A POLICEMAN ASSIGNED TO the Regional Special Action Unit of the National Capital Region Police Office allegedly shot dead a colleague early yesterday in Quezon City.

PO2 Rizaldy Santiago was arrested after the shooting of PO1 Rodrigo Alikpala on a footbridge at the corner of Edsa and Aurora Boulevard in Cubao.

The victim and the suspect, both assigned to the Light Rail Transit 3 Aurora Station, met as they both walked on the footbridge at past 1 a.m., police said.

Without warning, Santiago allegedly pulled out his service firearm, a 9-mm pistol, and shot Alikpala repeatedly, hitting him in various parts of the body, including the head, said case investigator PO1 Rogelio Rubio Jr.

The victim died instantly. Santiago tried to flee but was arrested by barangay watchmen who heard the gunshots, the investigator said. The motive for the killing was not known. The suspect and the victim were known to be friends, Rubio said.

Police Senior Inspector Rigoberto Caparoso said the case is under investigation.

Santiago is now detained at the criminal investigation division of the Quezon City Police District, while Villaruel's body was brought to the crime laboratory for autopsy.

Cancellation of Joc-Joc's visa goes deeper

IF FORMER AGRICULTURE SECretary Joselito "Joc-Joc" Bolante is sent back to the Philippines and he spills the beans on some administration people, his running mate could escape unscathed, some sources said.

The Senate is investigating a supposed fund scam with Bolante as central cog. Bolante will have a hard time explaining how he disbursed the P728 million supposedly intended for farmers. The Palace's detractors claim the money was used to buy votes, boost people in the administration and bankroll Bolante's reelection bid in the 2004 elections.

Having sleepless nights over Bolante's case in the U.S.

* * *

The cancellation of Bolante's visa was upon the **recommendation of the U.S. Embassy** on Manila Ave. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., a good friend of America because of the late father's closeness to the US, made the request to the U.S. Embassy for the revocation. There is more to find this councilman than what was reported.

A FATHER cradles one toy as cries at the flooded Tumana Bridge in Marikina after going fishing. AMY CALIMAG

Marikina bridge closed to motorists

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

POLICE AND RESCUE OFFICIALS ADVISED motorists yesterday not to cross the narrow Tumana Bridge in Marikina City.

Heavy rains the past few days caused the Marikina River to overflow, drowning the 50-meter long bridge connecting Marikina to Quezon City.

"We have already put up a sign before the bridge saying it is not yet passable," PO2 Rafael Tejapo of the Barangay Concepcion Uno Police Community Precinct told the Inquirer yesterday.

Rescue officials said the water would probably subside today or tomorrow.

Rescue officer Mike Gozum said the water level in the river rose to at least 13.8 meters, covering the bridge altogether.

He said the river's "normal" level was between 11-12 meters.

In August 2005, strong currents knocked out 50 cars off the bridge, when the driver decided to cross the bridge despite the rain downpour.

The body of the 36-year-old driver was found three days later about a kilometer from the bridge.

Tumana Bridge, built in 1994, connects Fairview Avenue in Barangay Concepcion Uno and the Loyola Grand Villas subdivision, which rises near the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

The ravine even claimed another life the other afternoon when a 27-year-old man drowned after he tried to swim in a ravine in Barangay Mahabang Parang in the city's east.

PO2 Albert Zeller told the Inquirer that Ryan Enriquez, 27, jumped into the ravine from his house about 12:30 p.m. Thursday.

His neighbors saw him disappear. His body floated after an hour.

Zeller said he and Enriquez did not know how to swim.

METROBRIEFS

Not quiet on PNU front

UGMC faculty members and students of the state-run Philippine Normal University yesterday distrust that assuming top control for northwestern is opposing the appointment of Former Lutgardis Barbo as their new president. Barbo's coming to power by Presidential Legal Order Number 1 who confirmed to faculty-related activities against this are already already appointed academic leader. "They are being asked to write a letter of apology apparently for engaging in peaceful activities, including rallies and holding protest barrage. They are being threatened with expulsion if they refuse," one professor told the Inquirer. Lutgardis Fernandez, leader of the Movement for the Advancement of Student Power said the group after three attorneys were summoned to the Office of the Student Affairs (OSA) on Tuesday to explain why they conducted a rally last week. "Our point is, after the they have to and only expand to the OSA and answer? That's clearly a case of intimidation and harassment. We just wanted our concerns, and that's everybody's right," she said in a text message sent to the Inquirer. Southern later work, on a statement, Barbo is not being asked to sign a statement of support for Barbo as we learned that Barbo's cancellation would no longer be removed, as one thing to one professor. "They approach teachers who have not yet been hired in a permanent status, and the professors added, saying the threats are effective" many," Evangelista-Cayosca, Barbo stepped the allegations. "But true, there's no basis for that," he told the Inquirer, but quickly added that those opposed against him should act within certain parameters, saying they are guided by rules and regulations of the university. "Within an academic setting, there are rules that have to be followed," he said. "Besides, there is a judicial committee which decides whether or not a member of the faculty is qualified for permanent status. The issues concerning students who have been making rallies, on the other hand, are being handled by the OSA," he said.

David C. Santos

Felipe D. Velasquez, 53

FELIPE D. Velasquez, brother of Manuel Velasquez, Makiya Libreja Cortes and Gina V. Bautista of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, passed away at 6 a.m. on Monday, July 10. He was 53. Born to the late Felipe Cruz Velasquez and Pia Dizon, the deceased has other brothers and sisters, Josefina Velasquez-Arca, Rosario Anna F. Gonzalez, and Rosanna Velasquez and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces. Velasquez's body lies at St. Paul of the Cross Funeral Homes Kamuning, No. 1 Mary Phillips, Mandaluyong City, where wake will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina on Wednesday, July 19.

PCU nursing lecture postponed

DUE TO inclement weather, the La Grande Tours in Lucena (LTL) Memorial Center organized by the Philippine Christian University-Mary Johnston College of Nursing scheduled tomorrow has been postponed to August 26. The lecture series this theme "Paradigm Shift in Nursing Practice in Global Effect," with noted nurse Dr. Apostolito Bienvenido as resource person. The nursing organization, the PCU Mary Johnston College of Nursing and the PCU-BSCN Alumni Association as part of the continuing professional contribution of this nursing institution. The lecture is also intended to the exemplary leadership and character of Lucenas, evidence-based the PCU-BSCN also considered her economic academic excellence, professionalism, discipline, and the spiritual nurturing of its students. For details, call 540-0000 or 345-3014.

India names new suspect in train bombings

IMAGE from New Delhi Television shows Sajjad Zahiruddin (left) and Zulfiqar Fayaz, said to be the key suspects in Tuesday's blasts in Bombay. Authorities on Friday named a third suspect as local media said the attacks were planned by Pakistan's main intelligence agency.

AP

WorldBriefs

Iran defiant after nuclear case goes back to UN

TEHRAN — Iran said on Thursday it would not abandon its right to nuclear technology in a defiant statement after Tehran's case was sent back to the UN Security Council over its atomic dispute with the West. But EU President George W. Bush kept up the pressure saying Tehran could not "wait us out" and seriously warned "other steps" would be necessary if Tehran did not respond to a package to rein in its atomic work. Five permanent Security Council members, the United States, France, Britain, Russia, China, plus Germany backed a package setting out Iran by March 2006 commitment in return for economic and diplomatic incentives. But on Wednesday they asked the council to intervene after Tehran failed to reply. The West says Iran wants to enrich uranium to produce atomic bombs, a charge Iran denies. It has vowed to halt the work. Reuters

Cheney, Rove sued in CIA leak case

WASHINGTON — Former CIA operative Valerie Plame and her husband sued US Vice President Dick Cheney, top White House aide Karl Rove and others on Thursday for their role in disclosing her classified CIA employment. The lawsuit alleged "a conspiracy among current and former high-level officials in the White House" to "discredit, punish and seek revenge" against Plame's husband, former ambassador Joseph Wilson, for publicly disputing statements made by Bush justifying the war in Iraq. The suit was the latest twist to a long-running saga over the public revelation of Plame that put 20 President George W. Bush on the defensive over his campaign to justify the war and reached into the highest levels of the White House. The lawsuit comes at a time when Rove, Bush's top political aide, seeks to keep Congress in Republican hands in November elections. Rove learned last month he would not face criminal charges in the CIA leak investigation. Reuters

Lipitor protected in UK

NEW YORK — Pfizer Inc. has announced that the United Kingdom's Court of Appeals has upheld the exclusivity of the blockbuster cholesterol pill. The active ingredient in Lipitor, the company alleges, is known to expire on October 2006 that found a proposed Ranbaxy generic would infringe Pfizer's lower Lipitor patent (GB 191 020). The decision prohibits Ranbaxy from introducing a generic version of atorvastatin in the UK before The ex-president of the lower patent in December 2011, subject to a possible further appeal to the House of Lords. Pfizer Vice Chairman and General Counsel Jeffrey B. Kindler said: "We are pleased with the unanimous decision, which affirms the lower court's ruling on our basic patent for Lipitor. This decision is consistent with the fundamental principle that patents exist to support the work of medical innovators pursuing discoveries that benefit current and future generations of patients around the world."

California emergency

LOS ANGELES — Gusty winds sparked a state of emergency Thursday in the southern parts of the state as brush fires engulfed more than 15,000 hectares of mountain scrub land 200 km east of Los Angeles. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's office announced the state emergency for Riverside County. County officials say some 1,000 buildings in and around the Yucaipa Valley area, some 1,000 firefighters battled the flames. "Conditions of extreme peril to public health and safety of persons and property exist within the county of Riverside caused by the wildfires," the governor's declaration said. Firefighters said the blaze was only 25 percent contained and they employed one of today's 12 helicopters and 100 fire trucks in their battle under the searing sun. AP

HOTSHOT scores hold the fire lines of a fire in Moronga Valley, California, July 13. AP/File

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LEBANESE citizens help a driver get out of his car mired in a big crater of mud and water caused by early morning Israeli air strikes on the Hezbollah-stronghold suburb of Dahiyeh, July 14. —AFP

The WORLD

Edna Lawrence B. Olasoo

Israel pounds Lebanon as world urges restraint

BEIRUT—ISRAELI WARPLANES STRUCK AT THE HEART OF Hezbollah's power base in pre-dawn raids Friday after a day of relentless attacks on Lebanon that left around 50 people dead and ignited fears of a regional war.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert had ordered the army to intensify the offensive against Lebanon after a barrage of rockets hit towns in northern Israel, including the Mediterranean port city of Haifa, killing three people.

In a wave of strikes early Friday, Israeli jets pounded Hezbollah's command headquarters in Beirut's Shiite-dominant southern suburbs, a power station, bridges and a Palestinian guerrilla base in northern Lebanon.

Israel on Thursday imposed an air and sea blockade on its northern neighbor and hit hard the closure of the country's only international airport with a wave of attacks that damaged runways and sent fuel tanks up in flames.

World powers have raised urgent calls for calm after the deadliest violence between Israel and Lebanon in a decade opened up a dangerous new front in the Middle East conflict after a massive Israeli onslaught against Gaza.

Washington said Israel, its closest Middle East ally, had the right to defend itself but urged restraint while several European powers openly criticized the scale of the Israeli offensive as disproportionate.

Envoys from the United Nations and the European Union are being urgently dispatched to the region to try to defuse the escalating crisis while the Security Council is to meet on Friday and Arab foreign ministers on Saturday.

Israel has pointed the finger of blame at Syria and Iran, saying its two arch-foes formed an "axis of terror" along with Hezbollah and Palestinian militant group Hamas, the target of its offensive in the Gaza Strip.

The latest crisis was triggered when Hezbollah guerrillas seized two Israeli servicemen in a deadly attack on the volatile Lebanon-Israel Wednesday, barely three weeks after a similar raid by Palestinian militants on the Gaza border Hamas resulted in the capture of an Israeli corporal.

An Israeli Cabinet minister also threatened to eliminate Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, in military enumerated who has said the two captured soldiers would only be released in a prisoner exchange.

"Nasrallah decided, his own fate," Interior Minister Roni Bar-On said. "We will settle our accounts with him when the time comes."

In a sign the Lebanese episode was far from over, Olmert authorized the army "to press on with its operations and hit more targets" after a late-night meeting with top defense officials.

At least 46 civilians in Lebanon, including children and whole families, were killed in seven days of Israeli strikes on them. Thursday that hit the airport, Hezbollah targets and in an area in southern Lebanon.

After a barrage of rocket attacks against towns in northern Israel that left three dead and 38 injured, two rockets fired from south Lebanon also penetrated deeper than ever inside Israel, hitting its third largest city of Haifa. —AFP

Thaksin's letters to state leaders called shameful

THAKSIN

BANGKOK, THAILAND—Opponents of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on Friday apologized to Muslims and Asian heads of state for letters sent by the Thai leader to US President George W. Bush and others that they said contained "false statements."

The People's Alliance for Democracy, which organized mass street protests against Thaksin earlier this year, delivered rebuttal letters to the Chinese and Japanese embassies and planned to deliver more later in the day to the British, French and American missions.

A letter to the Asian and European leaders noted that the anti-Thaksin movement went ahead on its plans for a campaign against "the tortoise" and "incorrect information" about Thailand's political crisis that Thaksin may have provided to leaders of those countries.

A separate letter in Bush expressed "shame" that Thaksin felt compelled to explain Thailand's problems to the United States. "It is a pity that makes our country look like a colony of yours."

Thaksin clashed off letters to leaders across Asia and Europe earlier this year. During an official visit in April, he met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Jacques Chirac, Russia's Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi.

But it was a June 23 letter to Bush that has caused consternation in Thailand. Critics have denounced the letter as shameful kowtowing to Washington and ascribed by Thaksin in spite the political crisis at his emergency at the victim.

In the letter to Bush, Thaksin said Thailand's democracy was "fully functioning."

"Having failed to provoke violence and disorder, my opponents are now attempting recourse extra-constitutional circles to co-opt the will of the people," he wrote.

Thailand's political crisis started in January when one of the richest of parliament cash to the Bangkok's streets demanding Thaksin's resignation, accusing him of corruption and pointing to financial deals the tycoon-turned-politician has made while in office. —AP

WHAT'S INSIDE

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SPORTS
E-MAIL: pi_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

■ Landis takes Tour de France yellow jersey /A26

Chinese aces give Asia 3-0 lead

Lin, Zhang, Malaysian pair nip Euro rivals

By Mwang R. Castillo

GETTING THE LIFT FROM TWO

Chinese aces who have been nearly invincible in the last two years, Asia last night dropped just one set in three matches for a commanding 3-0 lead over Europe in the MVP Cup: Asia vs Europe 2 challenge at the Araneta Coliseum.

World No. 2 Lin Dan, the left-handed, spike-haired 23-year-old, came roaring back from a first set loss to post a 19-21, 21-14, 21-10 decision of Europe's Nide Christian Kjeldsen in the opening men's singles.

Fall countrywoman Zhang Ning later routed Yao Jie of the Netherlands, 21-17, 21-19, in the ladies' singles, before the Malaysian men's doubles team of Chooong Tan Kien and Lee Wan Wah overcame Europe's Robert Mateusiak-Nadieszda Kostkiewicz, 23-21, 21-18.

Lin, who has lost just once to a European in his career, forced Kjeldsen, the Asian ranked 13th in the world, to backtrack when he threatened to thump and lead him stampeding to extinction following a 7-0 run that gave him a 12-8 lead.

The 5-foot-10 Lin has now won 60 of his last 65 matches, dating back to the Los Angeles, and his 45-minute conquest of Kjeldsen just made him a logical choice to be the captain's pick for Asia in the concluding men's singles tomorrow.

"I started feeling the court in the first set," Lin said through an interpreter in explaining why he fizzled a 9-6 lead to the set. "When I got into rhythm, everything fell into place and I got going."

Starting the second set, Lin, winner of seven of the last 12 BWF Grand Prix events and the one responsible for four of Asia's 10 point last year, seemed unable to make a mistake.

He smashed with authority, ran down drops with reckless abandon and flicked in shots with the touch of a master as Kjeldsen got restless return, the Chinese zoomed to a 20-11 lead.

The lanky (6'6") used a feeling-it-out period against Jie as the reigning Olympic champion never was firing right from the get-go and made...

CHINA'S indomitable Lin Dan smashes a set-up from Christian Kjeldsen of Denmark in the singles. Lin Dan drew first blood for Asia.

...failed her will easily.

"I was very happy (with the lopsided win)," he...cause. This is a great competition," said Zhang throughout tournament. "It was a tough match, but I showed a lot of composure out there."

"We did not play that well, we could have done better," said Pair, underscoring their dominance of the Thai-Denmark combine that labored hard when Mateusiak's regular partner, Michael Lypsa, withdrew at the last minute due to an injury.

"But I think it would not have made a difference (even if Lypsa was there)," Nide added. "We would have come out with the same intensity and determination, and I think we could have also won."

Nod-and-Nide, Malaysia's most experienced pair...

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54 applicants beat draft deadline

By Jane Navarro

FROM THE LOOKS OF IT, THESE PBL hi-tech entrants May 1 pick in the Philippine Basketball League rookie draft. Asef Asef and Sta. Lucia possesses the name it will rule first overall, the tapsuy will remain.

A total of 54 applicants beat the deadline for the rookie draft which will be tentatively held on Aug. 20 at the Robinsons Galleria in Ortigas.

Among them are Far Eastern's Arsenal Antoon and Ateneo's LA Tenorio—two players widely considered for the No. 1 position. Joseph Yeo, on the other hand, of La Salle, is a first round draftee, in.

Crowding Santos and Revote for the top pick are three blue-collar Filipinos in Kelly Williams, Jon De Veyra and Bob Reyes, who managed to rank their documents, which will be formally nominated before they are declared eligible.

Beyond the six players, though, everything's cross-up.

Applicants include 2004 NCAA MVP and Rookie of the Year Gabby Espinas, reigning NCAA MVP Jay Eugui, PBA's Mark Isip and RJ Rizada and the Letran trio of Noyet Bautista, Borjen and Mark Andaya.

Junjun Cabana of La Salle and UP's 6-foot-7 Bj Bono could have been first round draftees also but both are expected to be undrafted when PBL most names them as part of the roster it will choose in the pre-draft.

Other notable names in the list are monsters Magnum Membrere, Christian Luanzon of UST, Miguel Tiongson, Mariz and Oliver Dongking of UE.

Sta. Lucia finally came this year's top coveted pick, ahh-20 will rather settle and finish overall while Asi Miguel has the third and fifth picks in the first round.

Filipino Little League batters secure World Series berth

ARIANA, —TEAM PHILIPPINES OVERCOME THE Commonwealth of Northern Mariana is an abbreviated match, 13-3, yesterday to bag the Little League Asia-Pacific regional baseball championship here and earn the right to play in the World Series slated in the United States.

Representated by the International Little League Association of Manila (ILLAM) players aged 13-15, the Filipinos pelted three Mariana pitchers with a total of 10 hits to seal a date in the bracket known as Bangor Maine from Aug. 12-19.

Filipino ace Gian Jimenez allowed just two hits and one earned run before the game was called in the middle of the fifth inning at the Marianas, represented by the Saipan Little League champs, to deliver on the deficit before 15 runs.

Catcher Luke Bernardo scored second baseman CJ Concepcion with an RBI single in the first run of the first, reaching off the 10 offender.

The Filipinos, whose first two wins were anchored on starting pitcher Angelo Esguerra, last year's Most Valuable Player in the event.

The win came on the heels of the 10-1 victory over defending champion Guam, 7-0, Thursday.

The Philippines, runner-up to last year's regional tournament, also beat Indonesia, 9-2.

Chinese aces give Asians early cushion

From page A20

won two tournament in the past year and stands at least the semifinals of 14 of their last 15 events worldwide, including a runner-up finish in the All-England championships.

Asia is bidding to win the Thomas Cup—the event for the second straight year as crowd-darling Indonesian Taufik Hidayat defeats against world No. 1 Kenneth Jonassen in the men's singles match-up.

Each victory nets a point toward the team's goal, with the winner scheduled to the final day tomorrow bringing three ends. The winning continent will pocket $60,000 (around P3.13 million) out of the $100,000 dangled by telecommunications tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan, who celebrated his 50th birthday yesterday.

Pilipinas Events and Resource Associates will see action tomorrow against the world's top-ranked crowd pair of Tresna Lupiwaso and Eumilia Rytas Jalil.

The event is being presented by Smart Communications and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company and sponsored by ING, MBC 91, Mobile Solutions, Information Gateway, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Yehey! News, Sunday, the Philippine Star, Discovery Suites, Caltronix Photo Products and Gatorade.

DYAING King returns to an unexpected Yao Jin in the second singles. EDDIE GARCIA

Chinese flaunt new style

CHINA IS NOT JUST LOADING THE BOOKS in badminton. Huh—it's a response for a call by the Asian Badminton Federation for more stylish uniforms... also in badminton fashion. As eye-catching as his on-court tunes Lin Dan's clothing. The world No. 2 player is a strong one in his top-of-the-line wear you'd expect this 25-year-old from Shenzhen's Wenli Civilian Academy. 15-17, 21-14, 21-15, in the opening men's singles. "I bet more countries have some up-to-date uniforms," said Lin. The Chinese moments team is also sporting this same style in hot with body-hugging fit as displayed by World No. 1 Zhang Ning. For male counterparts, the more baggy, shirt-tuck-in-pants style is a think come mock just like-mess outfit. **Alec Anthony Rayos**

RP coach bets on Asia—and it won't even be close

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IT'S GOING TO BE ASIA BY A MILE.

The Austria forecast came from the Philippines' head coach Fyrol Chan himself, stating that, man-for-man, the region has the edge over Europe in the ongoing MVP Cup regional showdown at the Ateneo Coliseum.

Asia is buttressed by young players like Liu Jun of China and Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia. The 22-year-old Liu is the world No. 2, relinquishing the top spot he held for so long to Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei.

Hidayat, 25, is currently the world champion and Olympic titlist. He slid down to 23rd in the world rankings after missing key tournaments because of injuries.

"It showed the last transfer of talents in Asia which Europe doesn't seem to have," said Chan. "The Europeans have been there even before Liu Jun and Taufik started winning internationally."

Chan added that Europeans have drones to import. Asia remains instead of developing homegrown talents.

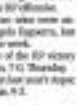
In this year's MVP Cup alone, Europeans will score on Jaime Jones (his Acadtea and China from Sta. Lu), who are now naturalized Netherlands citizens. Aarlina, who is married to a Dutch coach, is currently 6th in the world, while Jaime is No. 7.

"Skills and talents, they count equal distance," said Chan. "But other factors still definitely spell the difference. Plus, the winner will be playing at home grounds."

In the inaugural MVP Cup, Asia won by a big margin, 21-7.

MVP's fabulous birthday bash

IN HUDDLE



Keith Cadiz

FABULOUS. That's the only way I can describe the birthday celebration of PLDT chair Manuel Villar Pangilinan. MVP's last Thursday at the Manila Theater in Ortigas.

But day was actually the eve of MVP's birthday and he wasn't turning 50 or anything. At least, that's what I initially thought. He became a senior citizen when the clock struck 12 midnight.

When MVP said "happy weekends" would prevail the country, the main event for the evening, what sense to mind was the video of him and stunt-partner Rowing, and of people exaggerating beyond the entrances of the theater to hear dance.

Still, beer and all moment of honor really did flow and food came to abundance—roast beef, roast lamb, smoked salmon and sausage, all kinds of pasta, salad greens, mashed-olive Olive-style. I don't think my menu is complete because there were too many food booths and the place was rather huge.

In my book, that was a feast, not cocktail hors d'oeuvres.

Why, they even served dessert. What more important can be, however, was that they also served brown! Accubi-brand coffee.

* * *

From the moment we walked into the reception lobby of the Meralco Theater, we could tell that MVP's party was one classy affair. Lovely receptionists, all clad in Filipiniana, greeted guests and were supposed to encourage arena to welcome and guide the guests.

PLDT's Cathy Herrera, one of the party planners, said that the evening's festivities was for the officers and employees of PLDT, Smart Communications and Meralco Philippines, as well as friends and friends.

I have never seen so much flowers, not even during weddings. The tower must have been ordered in tons. For a while I thought some of them were artificial because there were just too many. I plucked one from a rose-studded Christmas tree just to find out if they were real. They were.

* * *

The concert was one of the best I've ever attended, ever, vis-à-vis those with foreign talents. Consider this cast: Sam Milanbelle, Regine Velasquez, Jed Madela, Dulce Cortes, Christian Bautista and Jon Santos who provided comic relief.

For middle dance, we thought that Gary Valenciano was coo-doos because the emcee, Anthony Pangilinan, announced that the cast was singing this last five songs.

Well, it turned out that Gary was being reserved for last. Gary shared his energy with his song and dance because pretty soon, everyone was dancing and singing with him.

The performance, according to Gary, was for a very special person "who is world-class and are truly Pinoy."

During the video tribute, somebody said that based on his track record with PLDT and all the other companies he handled, perhaps MVP should run for President of the Philippines. With his business genius, perhaps he can make the country as prosperous as his companies, the team on the video said.

Come to think of it, that's not such a bad idea. Not a bad idea at all.

* * *

Today at 4 p.m., Red Bull super Enrico Villanueva will exchange "I do's" with Janina Gandiaz at the Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills, San Juan.

Among the couple's principal sponsors are Red Bull team owner George Chua, Enrico's manager Arbea Santos and wife Cecilia, and Mrs. Lydia Gonzales, mother of Wesley Gonzales, the former Ateneo teammate who now plays for San Miguel Beer.

Pinoy Rugby, another former Blue Eagle who is now a Red Bull teammate, will stand as Enrico's best man while Red Alvarez and Wesley will act as secondary sponsors.

Considering that the PBA final series is ongoing, Enrico and his bride are lucky because they will have enough time for their honeymoon.

With all the venues booked for the weekend, the series will not resume until Wednesday next week.

Pacman vomits blood, rushed to hospital

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER PACQUIAO DID in the ring, had fixed succumbed in knocking out Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao yesterday.

Pacquiao, the WBC International champion, was rushed to Cardinal Santos Memorial Hospital in Mandaluyong City yesterday after vomiting blood, doctors and friends said.

Pacquiao's close friend, Rev "Wowie" Salud, said the 27-year-old boxer suffered stomach pains after eating lunch and had to be confined to the hospital.

One of his doctors, Regina Bagot, a gastroenterologist, said that Pacquiao had gastroenteritis and needed to rest. Other doctors at the hospital said Pacquiao might be released today.

Salud said Pacquiao had a history of ulcers and suggested his condition could have something to do with the fact that he had forgotten to take his medication before eating his lunch.

Pacquiao remained his world-super featherweight title on July 2 in a unanimous decision after a gruelling, 12-round contest with Mexican challenger Oscar Larios at the Ariana Coliseum. With a report from AFP

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SPORTSWATCH

Rubilar, Thai collide in Bangkok

BANGKOK: Juanito Rubilar and Thai Wanchai Singsangchai meet for the first time today in Bangkok for the official press conference of their 12-round bout to be held on Saturday for the World Boxing Council Flyweight title at the Lee Mak Dinsaeng Center in Bangkok, Thailand. The Siliman-based WBC had ruled that the winner of this fight will move on to challenge WBC-regular champion Omar Khorta, if he handles his bout. All this defense. Officials of the Rubilar-Singsangchai showdown are Alfonso Mabuti's Rubber and Judges Brad Rosado, Kanaya Takeuti and Jae Hong Kim. Rubilar is ranked eighth favorite among his opponent ranked 14th holds a 30-9-1, 14 KOs and has lost only once—to Jorge Arce—in his last 10 fights. Dakar Lagunday

Domingo defends title against Lear

IT WILL be sure today when Philippine boxing idol Michael Domingo defends his title for the third time against erstwhile champ Johnny Lear at the Makiwalis Mall in Alabang, Muntinlupa. Both fighters are in terrific shape and have worked for solo at all costs. In today's 12-round bout involving the Inspector/Interpol vs. Wise In The Mist fight card, Domingo, fighting out of the IDD Diadic, carries a super-bet July 2 with a 28-1 record advantage of Angeles of the Mountain vs the Mayor Alliance card at the Ananda Coliseum. Lear hopes to regain the title he had won in 2002. At yesterday's weigh-in at the Games and Amusements Board Office in Makati City, Domingo came in at 113.5 lbs while Lear checked in at 115 lbs. Edwin C. Lagunday

Makiling Challenge listing ends today

WARRIORS and fitness enthusiasts have until today to register for a shot in the 11-km/ 10km 6th Makiling Challenge which takes place on July 23, at UP Los Baños, Laguna. The race, which has so far attracted hundreds of participants, will consist of a 10-kilometer and 11-km run up the slopes of Mt. Makiling. The top finishers overall in each category will receive cash prizes. To complete in the 10km/ 11km City-to-Summit run, interested parties may register at the Members' Office, Pavilion Magsaysay Blvd., Sta. Mesa, Manila or at Eden Hall, UPLB, Los Baños, Laguna, or contact Makiling Campus Runners at 0919-2906960, 0920-6200742 and 0918-5208493. For registered participants will receive running singlets and total packs of 1-Lucky Day.

Effective teaching at Coach E School

PRIORITIES and students are assured of getting school running's worth as Coach E Basketball Academy offers its unique personalized instruction in Don Bosco Makati camp (July 17). The Don Bosco basketball gym (20) and storeroom (by Jim Lim) (St. International Basketball Academy president Kerry Maning said the school has an unbeatable 1-3 teacher-student ratio over various 4 started in August 2004. "We believe that parents shell out their hard-earned money for their children to learn so we couldn't not onboard any team basketball as signs on possible," Coach E is backed by Vice Mayor Mario Rosario, Barangay Ayala and Brothers Burger. For inquiries and reservations, call 831-1100 (Globe/Ayala).

Pasay cockfest slated July 16

PASAY City Councilor's 2 Gold Globes starts early at 8 a.m. to commence with 4 days of cockfighting action at the Pasay Cockpit Arena (along part) Sponsor is Sagupaan Competition 3000. For an entry fee of P1,100, each champion will get P6,500, according to promoters Fire-starter Rose, Hatchet, Clone and Running Hangers. Likewise, the Non-Sabungan Handicap is being held at Pasay Cockpit every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Meron-Meron Sabungan is also held at the PCC. Offer ends on Saturday, July 29, 26 and 28. Inquiries: Call 880-8888, 843-1160 and 893-0168 for details.

Saipukan Sa Taglugon round 3

THE THIRD round attractions of PCM Saipukan Sa Taglugon's cock derby gets going at 1 p.m. today at Mabel Coliseum with 12 maidens lined up. Main feature is 3-Way Derby Mix. A special prize of P100,000 will be divided among qualifying Kapatiks who will score two points in 3 derby's round. According to Saipukan's Executive Director Nestor Cabal and PCM Executive Director, members and guests can still join the derby on July 17 or 18. Derby fee is P10,000 and minimum bet is P5,000. Aside from the P2 million guaranteed prize, a brand new Ford Escape worth P1 million await the winners. Call 880-9471 and 896-3945.

Bautista shines as Letran keeps card unblemished

By Jasmine W. Payo

DON'T LET HIS SIZE FOOL YOU.

Defensive player/coach Reyjet Bautista stood tall when it mattered most, stunting defending champion La Salle to a 62-54 victory with over Philippine Christian U last night in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Billed as the first rematch between the two teams that dropped it out for the title last year, the game ended exactly the same way, with Bautista highlighting a second run that allowed the Knights to clinch a 6-0 lead.

The Cardinals, on the other hand, slipped to 4-1 in a tie with Emilio Rich.

"If not for Reyjet, we don't know where Letran would be in the standings," said Knights coach Louie Alas of his paired guard, who finished with 10 points and six rebounds.

In the other season's game, veteran forward Jeoffrecis Gonzales made five triples in the third quarter to help Stigma win back-to-back games with a 79-74 victory over New College of St. Benilde.

PCU's Kervie Timothy Mccoy and Letran's Hubie Mondragon (right) try to recover a loose ball in their game yesterday.

Warriors seek second win vs Tamaraws

NO ONE WAS MORE RELIEVED THAN coach Dindo Pumaren after the University of the East Warriors claimed the season opener in the UAAP men's basketball tournament.

"For the last two years we've been losing our first game, so it's good that we got off to a good start this season," said the third-year mentor.

But the jitters are back as the UE Warriors shoot for the solo 2-0 lead versus defending champion the Eastern U Tamaraws in the lone session match at 4 p.m. today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

"Our problem with FEU is we haven't seen them play complete," said Pumaren. "We played against them in the pre-season, but (coach mate) Jeff Cruz wasn't there. And they were able to watch our film game, so that's another advantage for them." Jasmine B. Payo

Pagadian prevails, ties NBC semis series

PAGADIAN CITY—EDMASSON TEAM PAGADIAN forced a do-or-die game 3 with Spring Cooking Oil-Shekinah in their best-of-three semifinal series Thursday night by winning, 99-85, in the 2006 Coconuts Brands-NBC national basketball championship at the city gym here.

Mayor Sammy Co's Explorers streaked to a 78-58 third-quarter lead and never looked back to level the series at 1-1 after losing, 75-52, in game 1 of the tennis sponsored by Benavente, Dolphin Lime, Nature's Spring, Molino, Spring Cooking Oil, Bogart Foods, Firefly Lightings and Prime Channel.

"The crowd really got us going," said Pagadian coach Reginaldo "Boong" Avila Cruz.

Six Explorers scored in twin digits as they made 11 of 22 attempts from the 3-point area, while the Cooking Oil masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tan" Padilla and Vice Mayor Anjo Plana shot just 27 percent (7-of-26).

ASIAN F3

Peña, Sy post fast times in practice

RENAULT leader Tyson Sy of the Philippines inspects his heavily rebuilt Clubsport 2004 prior to the afternoon practice session where he clocked second-best.

SUBIC BAY—ENRICO PEÑA CLOCKED up for Round 6 of the Asian Formula Three series by setting the fastest time in the morning practice session Friday while fellow Filipino top gun Tyson Sy came up second best in the afternoon, raising hopes of nowhere 1-2 Philippine finish for Christian Lantz and Associates Racing.

In the overall series leader after five rounds, pulled it off despite struggling with the handicap of a built Subaru 304.

But the duo will have to smash out the fastest Marco Wanderwallen who finished second in the morning and fourth in the afternoon, using a more powerful Dome Japan.

Wanderwallen's teammate Gilles Bonhoreal was third fastest in both runs as the drivers from Fujitsu Racing with Team Bonhoreal posed a close challenge after being nearly shut out in Round 5.

Peña's fastest qualifier time was kept in the afternoon runs but the 19-year-old Team Goddard lead driver was superbothered, saying he would have gone quicker than his fastest time of one minute and 55.393 seconds in the morning if not for that glitch.

"I had very uncomfortable with the car more," said Peña, who returned to the pits on the 12th lap of the morning run to change to new tires even as the test operated to keep their old tires.

"We have to know how much advantage our lower to sense of time."

All the drivers struggled in the humid conditions, but the weather was not the only challenge for Peña. Drivers are expected on Saturday with typhoon Florita, which set across the Philippines in the middle of the week, on its way here.

"I don't think the weather's going to be a problem," said Peña, whose slim lead is supported by widespread, published, Mountain and Chandra.

Race enthusiasts can log on to www.asianf3.net and www.supaf3.net for regular updates.

Sy, 16, claimed his team's last-hand the proper set-up for his Subaru which figured by a crash with Spanish Ambassador-turned-rookie Adrian Carlos Bernal Jr.

He was bogged, however, by tires that obtained in the morning practice session where he was 0.8% fastest. He showed remarkable improvement in the afternoon run with a clocking of 1:58.942.

Winston, meanwhile, clocked the second fastest time of 1:58.533 in the morning and 1:58.769 in the afternoon.

Wanderwallen is running fifth in the standings with 82 points behind by 69% Bonhoreal (96) and Peña and Mr. Jackson (both 92).

Bella Howard, ruling in the Wanderwallen class for cars with 4-cylinder built in 2004 and older spun out after just three laps in the morning run but was confident she would do well in Saturday's race.

POC looks elsewhere for Asiad help

By Marc Anthony Reyes

COJUANGCO: Urgent visit

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC Committee is making every effort to confirm the offers of billionaire sports patron Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski and former Senator Mike Arroyo's inability to help in the country's preparations for the Asian Games in December.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday said he has received pledges of support from the Filipino community in the United States and from a top local businessman.

Speaking at the Swoopcast Kalayaan, Cojuangco said PLDT and Smart Communications chair Manny V. Pangilinan promised to help us long as the POC and the national sports association (NSAs) can secure top with long-term plans.

"Although I have to admit that PCSO support is very substantial, I am very glad to say that there are people in the US willing to help in any way they can," said Cojuangco.

Arroyo, who raised P100 million for the 85th athletes' preparations for the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, has not indicated whether he would help raise funds again for the Asiad campaign.

POC sources, however, said they are still hoping that Mr. Arroyo would relent as the Olympic body is still reserving the Asiad third elimination post for him.

Cojuangco said Filipinos in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco, New Jersey and Chicago are offering their houses as the solution for those while they are competing or training for the US.

He said the POC would unveil about P1.88 million to fund the PH athletes' Asiad preparations and campaign.

SPORTS

Landis takes Tour lead

VILLAR, SPAIN—PARIS COULD BE THE LAST Tour de France for Floyd Landis. If so, then at least the US cyclist is determined to go out in style.

Landis, competing in cycling's most grueling race with what he says is a potentially season-ending arthritic hip condition, took the overall lead Thursday in the hardest stage of the high Pyrenees.

Landis didn't win the stage—that honor went instead to Iranian Iouri Mercheluz—but it didn't matter. The American's goal was to distance key rivals, establishing himself as the favorite to become the heir to Lance Armstrong, his former teammate. He did so, with style.

The 30-year-old, who rebelled against his prima Pyrenean upbringing to start racing as a teen, grinned broadly as he became the fifth US cyclist in the Tour's history to don the lead, yellow jersey.

"A dream come true," he said.

His performance offered a little clarity to the Tour, too. The race had been lawless since a doping scandal knocked out several of the favorites before the start on July 1. Thanks to the Pyrenees, there's the beginnings of a hierarchy for the first time, with 115 Tour aficionados climbs over 2000.3 laborious (1166 miles), under the hot sun, mercilessly whittled down the field.

By the finish, at the Pla de Beret ski resort above that Spanish town, just two riders had managed to cling to Landis' bleeches and fellow American Levi Leipheimer looking to redeem what has been a horrible Tour for him so far.

Although the gaps that Landis opened up aren't as large as those that might soon to be seen hurdles Alps next week, they were still significant—if not decisive.

Norman Andreas Klöeden, runner up to Armstrong at the 2006 Tour, finished 1 minute, 31 seconds behind. Portuguese rider Jose Azevedo dropped 6:41, as did Italian Gilberto Simoni.

AP

LANDIS: Hoping to end career in style AFP

Ben officially a Bull

CHICAGO—BEN WALLace signed a four-year, $60 million contract Thursday with the Chicago Bulls after leaving the Detroit Pistons, the team he led to four straight conference finals and an NBA championship.

WALLACE AFP

The 6-foot-9 Wallace, a four-time Defensive Player of the Year, will give the Bulls and their young nucleus an inside presence they lacked while being eliminated in the first round of the playoffs two straight seasons.

Wallace made his decision to bolt the Pistons after a face-to-face meeting with general manager John Paxson and coach Scott Skiles. The Bulls, with room under the salary cap, also offered more money.

Wallace ranked fourth in the NBA last season in rebounding (11.3), ninth in blocks (1.2) and 13th in steals (1.78)—the only player among the top 10 in all three categories.

Asked what the problem was with his free throw shooting, Wallace showed a sense of humor.

"I miss more than I make," he said.

Meanwhile, The Los Angeles Clippers confirmed Thursday they have signed forward Tim Thomas as a replacement for Serbian Vladimir Radmanovic, who signed earlier in the day with the Los Angeles Lakers.

AP, AFP

SATURDAY Special
Editor Nonoy V. Torre
Assistant Editor Nina P. Aviles

New movies boost Filipino films' happiness quotient

GARCIA. Embarrassingly obscene.

By Nin P. Aviles

"I Wanna Be Happy"

Dir. Joey Javier Reyes

It's Bibbidi Gardia, Gloria Romero, Cherry Pie Picache, Ryzza Reyes, Joey Marquez

DON'T BE FOOLED BY ITS BIG-rapid title. Joey Javier Reyes' latest production is one of the better local movies this film season—and Solar Films' most successful cinematic effort in years.

After a seemingly petty argument, Manang Gloria Romero suddenly packs up her bags and leaves Dr. Eddie Garcia lonely guy's middle before their 50th wedding anniversary.

The unexpected development turns the couple's household upside down, and discombobulates their three children—Jim (Joey Marquez), a recently widowed doctor; Suzy (Cherry Pie Picache), a neo-conservative homemaker with a two-timing husband, George (Christian Vasquez); and the stubbornly independent Tish (Ryzza Zobel), who's been living with Jim (Alfred Vargas) for two years.

But, the dot-on-funny doesn't stop there: While Manang basks in the joys of independence (she discovers the spa, house-visiting and ballroom dancing, and travels to Bangkok), and Dr. Garcia enjoys the cheap thrills of his newfound bachelorhood (he loves bingo hosts Cristy—played by the delightful, scene-stealing Rowell Santos—the lovely pasasamsam he sweet as a pie), Jim, Suzy and Tish are forced to confront their respective hurdles at home while they try to patch things up for their squabbling folks.

Bibbidi Tito's production outfit takes a road seldom traveled and delivers a wholesome package that smartly capitalizes on its actors' collective likability, notably Garcia, Romero, Reyes (who makes her last-class appealing, dramatic sympathetic) and Picache (who shines in an empowering, cathartic scene at the supermarket).

The heartening Romero manages to hold her own against the endearingly abrasive Garcia, who delivers a familiar but nonetheless effective portrayal of the stubborn patriarch.

But, the movie's best witness flows in Picache, in a no-nonsense storyteller-turned-lass that has Manang explaining her sudden flight as a move play "to prove a

MMF, A4.1

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CENTERSTAGE

EVENT CALENDAR

September 2, 2006
Saturday • 8:30 pm

the APO experience

'Master Class'

HALLDELL AND GREEN
Tadhill Hallmark's 'Bankman'

CURRENTLY SHOWING AT THE RCBC Rotunda Theater on Ayala ave., is the Philippine Opera Company's production of Terrence McNally's Tony Award-winning play "Master Class," starring Ms. Salvacion Gutierrez as Maria Callas and directed by Michael Williams. The classical-cast shows his performing at Juilliard opera with voice instructor Sarah Gardener, Sharon Bebee and John Glen Garcia as the young singers who are relentlessly critiqued by Callas. Visit www.philippine-opera.com.

MONTAGE

Family drama on Hallmark Channel

"Bankerman," a six-part family drama, premieres on the Hallmark Channel on 8 p.m. tomorrow. The miniseries is about a widower, George Bankerman (Robert Loggia), who, despite ill health and a rocket ride, tries to maintain his wife's office, as her and his children, Angela and Tom (John Bell), scramble over who's "me" he's the day.

As he and his team build the rocket, they also rebuild their fractured relationship, mend business ties and, of course, find romance. From neglect to schoolwork, and Angela deals with teenage issues, as the grandson surrounded by comics to an iffy proposition. Encore telecast is on July 17 at 3 p.m.

'Showmanship for Solo Singers'

What qualities must solo singers have to catch and sustain the interest of their audience? What are the elements that comprise an outstanding solo singing performance?

Find out on July 22, from 1 to 6 p.m., when the acclaimed Grimes Inciong, who is known for his exquisitely orchestrated concerts, shares his expertise and experience on the performance stage in "Showmanship for Solo Singers" at Ryan Cayabyab. The Music Museum. Call 841-3308 or 687-2674.

Bands of Mayors

Mayors of the Metropolis Complex, Quezon City, Pasay City, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Taguig, Pasig, Marikina, Mandaluyong, Makati, Manila, Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela, San Juan, Pateros

Five more performances for 'Nasaan si Hesus?'

REMY PIMENTEL AND NESTOR TORRE'S acclaimed religious musical, "Nasaan si Hesus?" has been performed over 30 times, but the drama-comedy-musical production remains popular with viewers and sponsors.

Next month, it will have five more performances. At 8 p.m. on Aug. 5, "Nasaan si Hesus?" will be staged at the Our Lady of Sorrows church in Bacood, Sta. Mesa for the Daughters of Bisu Inc. Inarulans. (Call Gaelle Barrera at 0908 937 5842.)

Health services

And, on Aug. 11 and 12, the show will have 3 p.m. matinee and 7 p.m. evening performances at St. James Academy's Mother Francisca Auditorium in Malolos City. The four shows will raise funds for the Diocese of Caloocan, in cooperation with the Caloocan Diocesan Schools Association, in-come generated will go to the Priests' Welfare Fund and health services for the clergy of the diocese.

PIMENTEL AND PAGUEZ. Raising funds for a good cause.

The executive committee's own all chairperson is Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, and Rev. Msgr. Berseniges A. Lorbega, Rev. Fr. Arsenious Ma. J. Cruz and Sr. Ma. Stella D. Tagulinod, O.P., are the vice chairpersons. Call 287-9328 or (cell)0.339-9137.

Trials

"Nasaan si Hesus?" dramatizes the daily struggles and trials of Christine in a wide variety of situations that different age groups can readily empathize with.

Its cast is composed of gifted musical-theater standouts like Bobo Balbo, Andy Ban, Shaida Bautista, Catherine Estabillo, Nadja Mendiola, Bobby Romero, Gerl Reyes, Rey Miranda, Reynaldo Reyes, Al Reyes, Mitos Torre and Jun Hernandez.

If you want "Nasaan si Hesus?" performed in your parish, school or locality, call Andy at 780-9210 or 0919 286-5424.

FULLER LIFE

Sara Lee brought me life's luxuries and financial security!

Teodoro Ortega, one of Sara Lee Direct Selling's top sellers, drives his brand-new Honda Accord Exi-Navi, a reward he bought through Sara Lee's Ride-to-Success Program.

Twelve years ago, Nestoran Ortega of Bian filled himself counted money for a living. He was a typical bank employee who wanted more to give his family a brighter future. His consuming misery was over exactly his rate of a lifetime occupation. "The fact that I was counting somebody else's money and not mine, made it more worse," he said today.

Until Sara Lee Direct Selling beckoned. He realized the products were of quality nature and unmistakable, generating repeat orders. He learned about its attractive and lucrative opportunities and in a far more attractive Honda, he now became a dealer for Sara Lee.

His decision proved to be a wise one. "I used to be an overseer," he revealed. "But Sara Lee transformed me into a leader, someone who can motivate, talk and convince people."

As he pursued his dream of a life that he gained, He has acquired greater earning power as well. Now one of Sara Lee's top Independent Business Managers (IBMs), Nestoran no longer counts other people's money. His generous earnings at Sara Lee support not just his family's needs. With it, he has bought four brand-new vehicles as well. Plus, he has the lovely house that he wanted as already-all major items of his desire for free!

Like Nestoran's life-changing experience at Sara Lee, everyone can turn their life into an exciting and prosperous one. The key to choosing the right path to happiness and success. Ang Nestoran it is to pursue the passion through this profitable world of direct sales, or, more called Sara Lee Direct Selling.

Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines Inc. is one of the leaders of Consulting Services and Direct Selling Industry in the Philippines. Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines Inc. is duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Trade and Industry. Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines Inc. is not a pyramid scheme and complies with all applicable laws, rules and regulations governing direct selling in the Philippines. For more information, please call (02) 633-8888 or visit us at www.saraleedirect.com.ph

New movies boost Filipino films' . . .

From page 42-1

point"—including serious threats of assessment and a scary trip to the U.C.I.D.Center.

Despite the film's tendency to overstate the obvious, Reyes strings some logical, plausible explanations to justify a feel-good finale for everyone. But, while the wish works for the easily-pleased moviegoer, the narrative's easy way out feels more dishonest and disingenuous than realistic—as it is supposed to be.

"Saan Magsisago si Happiness?"

Dr. Florida Beatrice

S. study lists, Mica Torre, Micky Bravo, Noni Buencamino, Nanette Inventor, Cardinal Sarmiento, Bay Cortez, Dorling Leviste

From the dynamic team behind last year's award-winning Cinemalaya entry, "U.C.I. Bed #7," comes a refreshing sunbreeze that continues the recipe for an indie smash: Florida Beatrice's directorial debut (which will be screened at the CCP from July 18 to 22, visit +63(02) 2624 1382 for screening schedule) is a flawed but well-meaning cinematic treatise that puts a genuine spin on man's constant search for happiness.

Interspersing drama, comedy and music, the film weaves its socio-realist allegorical

TWO A15

DIVINO AND BAEZ. Topbill Cinemalaya entry, "Saan Magsisago si Happiness?"

'Master . . .

From page 42-1

K Brosas

K Brosas marks her birthday with "K Brosas, for Girl" tonight at Sunday Tennis Monaco. Guest performers include Ryza, Jessica Reyes, The Bones, Gerald Linares, The Ong Cite and Regine Velasquez. Call 373-9662.

Gerald Anderson

The "Gerald's Dance Picks" album mall tour starts at 4 p.m. today at Old Archives, Laguna. Gerald Anderson's dance selections include "Dale Candela," "Out of Touch," "Know You Primes," "Make That," "Can't Get Enough" and "Bounce."

Aware'

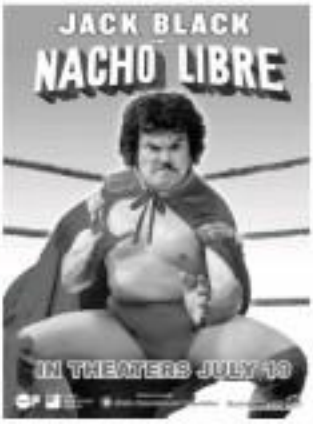
MCA Music, Fedpi magazine and the Shangri-La mall celebrate the release of Andrea Brazil's latest album, "Aware" on July 18, 5 p.m. at the atrium of the Shangri-La in Ortigas Center, accompanied by jazz quartet, Jeanette, actor Jonathan Sadora will interpret tracks from the album. In "Aware," Brazil deviates from his previous albums with a more sensuous sound. He considers the collection the most musically satisfying of his career.

Tivalak Festival

Sarah Geronimo and Mark Bautista will perform at the seventh Tivalak Festival in South Cotabato (July 15-18). Events Daily until July 18, Beatbox—finals of the Bands. Today, Photojournalism Showcase, Flat Track competition and Indian Sports. Tomorrow, Motocross and Flat Track competition and Bboys ng South Cotabato competition. July 17, National Modern Dance competition. July 17, National Modern Dance competition.

TWO B14

ANDERSON. Mall tour for his debut album, "Gerald's Dance Picks."



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SEE YOU THERE!
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Mitch Valdes keeps getting better and better

By Bobo Cervantes

SINGLEHANDED, I DECLARE MITCH Valdes a national pop-culture resource. After all, she is not only multi-talented, she's also a committed artist and a talented actress.

Unlike those who merely do things for publicity, Mitch actively chooses her battles. Once known as Mitch, she isn't just one of our Bistek counterfeiters, she also happens to be a fine singer and a wonderful film and stage actress.

She is a role model for the country's entertainers; they leadership of the Organization for an mga Pilipinong Mang-aawit has lent prestige to the entertainers' group and resulted in awe-inspiring achievements.

Performance

Our friend assesses his performance this way: "Energy-no size" And I completely agree. She invests so much of herself in the roles she plays, the excess is the stage. Indeed, there are many aspects in her artist's craft that are mind-boggling—if it is not.

For starters, the performances become natural, because we realize how much she opens herself up to us. Her generosity and courage to share her personal experiences take us by surprises, but later we know we're also gone through the same experiences as our younger, more reckless years.

Sense of responsibility

We have survived how foibles and have become better persons. The common experience binds us with Mitch and the rest she speaks of, so a result, we develop a sense of responsibility for those around us. It wasn't just fun and games, after all!

This role performance is a sensitive and intelligent person who allows you a rare glimpse of herself. But, there's much more to her. Without a doubt, she's also a astounded with a deep love for her country.

"At some her serious side, but she never pushes it further because she doesn't want to weaken politics with satire. Therefore, you know Mitch's show highly entertained, but you're also impressed by the and behind-the-scenes issues.

Mitch is one of my favorite entertainers. I rank her among the very best—in the world. When she combines music, music and dialogue she's indefinite.

When I was living in New York, I used to watch Susie O'Donnell's TV talk show regularly. I couldn't help comparing the wonderful American comedienne with Mitch. Susie's unaffectedly goofy—she has cool and has wonderful support with her audience.

Advocate

But Mitch has all of that—and more! She can sing—from ballads and blues to rock and roll and hip-hop! She surely uses her persona to advocate for the rights of her fellow artistes, women, and the country in general. In short, Mitch is the "complete" Filipino performer.

When I read that Mitch's current show at the Cultural's Bar of the Musicians Carousel was extended through all Fridays this month, I cheered, because more people can get to appreciate her for the fine performer that she is.

The more of Mitch, the merrier!

VALDES. Doesn't want to confine politics with satire.

'Jazz and More' showcases Mon David's winning form

By Rico B Aida

THE NIGHT MAY have been cold and rainy but Saturday, but the crowd inside Greenhills's Ouzinge was warm and jovial—not adjectives you'd normally use to describe the atmosphere in a conventional jazz concert.

When Mon David's grand performance at the first Jumbo Jazz-and-More concert was announced, most music mags for his special show, "Mon David—Jazz and More," he did more than just demonstrate complete control of his vocal facility, he also shared a wonderful and devoid of vanity and braggadocio.

Backed by talented musicians led by musical director Mark Lopez, Mon solidified our fast he has performance in his songwriting and interpretation. Most musicals to OPM and regional music, and consistently delivered renditions that seemed a whole period of emotion.

Dynamic artistry

The magic was all latent, but his dynamic artistry was likewise in full throttle in his version of

DAVID. Complete control of his vocal facility.

Burt Bacharach's "Alfie," by request, his fusty mix Bobby McFerrin, memory was more than mere mimicry.

In the classic-endorsed "Summer Me, Winter Me," Mon showed off a vocal range that was astute at all levels. Unlike many pop artists these days, David doesn't push beyond his capacity just to prove his versatility.

So, when he sang "Somewhere"—a multi-level, difficult yet deceptively wrinkled—expect from a deep-rooted crooner—he successfully delivered the tune and gave a different context. He did the same thing with his renditions of Willy Gil's "Isaac"/"Wish Dang Pidot" and Louie Armstrong's "How Long

sang Mandalita."

He gave Michel Legrand's "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?" a tasty spin without sacrificing its melodic elegance.

In the authentic "Let Go," culled from the singer's recent "Life and Times" album, the singer created music from different sounds that reminded us of Al Jarreau and Dark Lowers' "Spain."

Evening of nostalgia

The 20-song performance soon turned into an evening of nostalgia. He sang Boz Scaggs's unexpected track to—different times of your life. He devoted portions of the show to the classic of Lou Rawls ("Pure Imagination," "Lady Love") and Nat "King" Cole ("Smile," "The Very Thought of You," "More Than," "L.O.V.E." and "Stardust").

Special guest Shaira Bautista's short stint was a glowing reminder of her formidable talent. Backed by the multi-awarded Milton DeJuga and Willy Illona's "Orange-Colored Sky" to blow and sang Arthur Schwartz' "Alone Together" with him.

Mon's collaborations with his talented kids, Nicole and Cyrus, were among the show's highlights. David confused good looking youngsters a variety of environmental instruments. (For his

box, the ensemble) as he educated and accompanied his father in Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Double Rainbow."

But, the favorite portion of the show was Mon's duet with his talented daughter, music of theater actress, Nicole. The father and daughter duo sang "Lullaby"—before, the latter took in "Life and Times." The song is about a father's promise to guide and protect his daughter as she follows her own path in life and takes flight in the world of adults.

The loving, soothing rapport between Mon and Nicole touched us. After all, it is a collection of what man goes through in life—how it transcends its academic form and turns it into pulsating, learning human experience.

Sentiment

The song's sentiment reminded us of our departed Ka Gino—who taught us how to listen. When he was alive, at every rally called him if there was anything about commodities and desiring that we couldn't figure out. When he passed away, we were at a loss—in guidance and support. But, we have realized that everything he taught us would eventually get us through all of life's bumpy rides.

Hallmark Channel offers new look and experience

HALLMARK CHANNEL IS considering its positioning in the leading providers of quality entertainment with the launch of a new look and program lineup lineup.

The new look signifies the Hallmark Channel's commitment to offering the best television of movies, miniseries and drama series to its ongoing channel environment that is relevant to the times audience.

Most compelling

Mr. Anthony Rimmy, Asia Pacific managing director of Sparo-owned Media Group, said, "Hallmark's new look is designed to present its programming in the most compelling way. We will continue to provide quality production values and premium entertainment choices."

Hallmark's Asia Pacific executive director, Carmen Ung, said, "Hallmark movies in everyday events in life are a wellspring for dramatic storytelling. Hallmark offers great dramatic entertainment that draws on the full range of human emotions. Consistently we have set out to collect that great movies often cited to the daily drama that surrounds us."

The new look features from idyllic landscapes and scenes filmed in Malaysia, Thailand

MACLACHLAN AND MYHAR. Tonight "Mysterious Island."

and India.

High quality

Hallmark will continue to offer high quality miniseries, based on real-life historical events, classic titles of outstanding great people in history, and inspiring true stories.

This year, the channel's miniseries include "Bonanza," starring Lorne Greene and Dan Blocker's "Mysterious Island," starring Kyle MacLachlan and Gabrielle Lazure), William Goldings's "To the Ends of the Earth," and the action adventure, "Superior Ty."

During weekdays, Hallmark's lineup includes "Judging Amy," "Family Law," "Spenser," "Midsomer Murders," "Wire in the Blood," "Inspector" and "Harry."

Strictly for racing movie enthusiasts

By Nestani Torre

BASED ON THE WILDLY POPULAR manga series by Shoshi Magawa, "Initial D" tells the story of Takumi Fujiwara, a quiet 19-year-old high school student who works at a gas station. He takes care of his alcoholic father, has a steady car, and enjoys dinner treating mountain roads in style known as drifting.

Racing style aside, he does not—think God—have much in common with Luke Black's amazing character in "The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift."

Attitude

However, "Initial D" is still a movie racing movie, even if Takumi is replaced by Mondragon. And, my Christ isn't bulging with muscles or steroids. It's short cuts and how to get to the finish line first.

If you're not a racing hero or a fan of the series, both, you'll probably find most of this movie boring. Even its fans may find something to gripe about, especially concerning the last duel, though this is the type of movie that will thrill its fans.

Takumi's skills in drifting (a) racing, the car is nearly built up to bring being and Fujiwara) serves who speak Cantonese.

Other legends aspect of the film are bonding scenes and sleeps, but it's not clear if that's the performer's fault, or what her isn't just staying true to his character.

"INITIAL D." Based on Shoichi Shigeno's popular manga series.

Anthony Wong Chau-Sang plays Takumi's mentor Bunta, a personality impressed former racer who now makes ends for a living.

Wong capers bossing humor and color into interesting scenes, though the movie ghosts as over the fact that his character has apparently known his son had enough to learn performances years.

Charming protagonist

Directed by Andrew Lau and Alan Mak, "Initial D" has decent racing sequences going for it, as are some extremely charming protagonist, and a slick look for makes it easier to swallow.

On the downside, the forgettable Fenny Fanning and Daddicks are annoying, and the movie never really picks up speed. So don't recommend this film to people who don't care about a Toyota's suspension problems.

Veggie savvy

EATING NUTRITION MONTH. July should make us reflect on our dietary and food consumption. A healthy diet and dietary should not only be nutritious, it should also be economical and in fun many with nature's love.

There days, transport fruit in season—mangoes, durian, strawberry. They are into basketball, swimming and martial arts like taekwondo, sambo and aerobics—and vegetables. We asked some of them who they have become vegetarians. Their answers:

Delicious

"Vegetarian food tastes delicious. Also importantly, preparing them does not involve cruelty to animals. Our human race is not eating us and that has been ruthless and slaughtered."—*E. Isidro*

"Vegetables are good for my health, and for the health of the planet."—*R. Isidro*

"I hungry me healthy and fit. If you want to live longer, switch to vegetables."—*R. Olivarez*

"No eating meat conserves water, saves land and saves. More people are fed if we use grains for livestock."—*V. Bernardo*

LOTUS POND

R. Valenzuela and S. Bernardo

"At least I won't have to find guilty that animals are suffering for my satisfaction."—*A. Bautista*

Responsibility

"It's a sane society's responsibility to protect people and animals alike from unnecessary pain."—*J. Bermudez*

"A clean lifestyle is good for my health."—*R. Valenzuela*

"A vegetarian diet gives me a fast energy."—*M. Balderian*

"My body is only meant for vegetables, not dead bodies."—*R. Benavente*

As they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. These young vegetarians benefit from a nutritious diet, but they also contribute to the protection of animals and their environment. Indeed, a good example to emulate.

Allan K makes delicious lemonade

By Jocelyn Valle

ALLAN K. His being an entrepreneur may outrival his being a performer.

WHEN LIFE HANDS YOU lemons, make lemonade! That's what Allan Kabigting did years ago when he left his hometown, Bacolod City, to embark on a singing career in Manila. Instead, he ended up doing comedy.

"Mahirap din naman ako," he quips, "Akim ko ay ang mendoza na resipe, parapo ko comedy, tsaka ang sining matitira! Kung sino, kung sinabihan akong pango at payat, nakikipagpatintero ako. Ngayon, mas appreciate ko na ang humor."

Brand of comedy

Allan's brand of comedy turned out to be his ticket to mainstream entertainment after he did the rounds of stints from dubbing and *bapor*.

People behind the scenes drew, "Eat Bulaga," was looking for somebody who could share hosting and clowning chores with its regulars like Vic Sotto and Joey de Leon when they discovered Allan in the same talent search that got him as one of the show's mainstays.

After 11 years on the show, Allan has become a household name. He's now a multi-media performer and successful entrepreneur.

Music bars

When we first he decide from emceeing comedy and stands bars

Like Eleanor and Dindo?

"Hehh. Iyon ito (to reassure) ee wow!, you are able to provide jobs. In every branch, we have around 50 employees. You also discover upcoming comedians. Magsasabi ng ng ito, dahon, tatlo...wow! Nadagdagan ako ng 50 kaibigan! Sabi kaibigan kong humorist si arnaiz, nagbabi ay pak. Now, I can choose the projects I want to do!"

Winning the box-office battle at indie festival

By Ramon E. Bayron

"THERE'S LITTLE DOUBT that we're bound to discover more cinematic gems at this year's Cinemalaya film festival.

The second movie venue is fast gaining a reputation as the Mardi Gras for the cinematic—despite its tiny, dwindling size of its organizers. The credibility of its jury and the collective talents of the artists (actors, directors, writers, etc.) involved.

Yet, as the production steps come to a close, the movies' producers—and cinema's horse, counter—once have—must now contend with a different kind of challenge; one that is arguably more vicious, more complicated, and more time-consuming. The stakes are higher. The "marketing and distribution" line, folks! It's time to sell your films!"

Point of reference

Fortunately, this year's batch has a noteworthy point of reference for marketing strategy in last year's runaway box-office winner, "ang Pagdadagat ni Mariang Makiling."

The innovative approach to the marketing of "Mariang" maximized the use of alternative (non-in-house-one media outlets (Internet websites, multiple ad-hoc screenings), and was matched by its filmmakers' determination to reach a wider audience (that's the film isn't re-shot-ended.

Note that, unlike some other digital features, "Mariang" focused on the local market before going international.

This strategy makes sense, because the performance of any movie in the domestic box office is given significant consideration by many film buyers overseas. Their rationale is as simple as it is powerful: "If you can't sell your movie in your own country, why sell it to us?"

Viable audience

"Mariang's" ardent efforts eventually paid off. Now Raymond Lee, Michiko Yamamoto and Antoinette Jadaone's films is widely regarded as indispendent cinema's most successful project thus far.

This reality is not in any way inconsistent with the southern agenda of the Cinemalaya festival, and in fact complements it. Cultivating a viable audience is achieved by promoting quality filmmaking.

Another observation: Cinelyn (note the dot) had, fashionable, before audiences discovered "Mariang's" artistic merits, interest in the movie had been piqued because of its catchy title. The blessings of a preposterous name? —Who wouldn't be intrigued?

Except for an entry that asks "Enan Pagkatapos ni Rapunzel," this year's selection somewhat comes each (calling wordplay). Sometimes, it's all about the packaging—eh-ehh.

New movies . . .

From page G1-3

dan-sound Tikes (dede Bolo), a 50-something ex-couple (Nanette Inventor) and the colorful characters (Joe Vivas, Elijah Castillo, Ajuna de Guzman, Jiseh Alfonso) who inhabit the narrow streets of Barangay Kampanya, the poverty-ridden urban environment for plot, and the screenplay's setting.

Maita (the brutal Bella Flaunty heart), who unabashedly plans to his affections; the distant lover, Harding Lorenzo), who woos and breaks his heart when she tells her no-romantic-up-front-and-personal-with-Harding Dorsey; Dr. Ace Bonoan (Maestro Inventor), his assistant-pining slut (an endlessly who falls for his boss (Ina Cortes); Bernie (Mico Torres), the precocious kid with troubled parents (Boyd Bustamante and Karla Estrada) who discovers love during a talent search, and his long lost mother, Imelda (Carmi Raymundo), who he thought was dead as a tragic accident that claimed the lives of 120 victims.

Jam-packed and to-the-nth-pitched, the production, however, is bogged down by its awkward border to Dramatic time and beyond—and to some extent, end-up—seem as a collection of vignettes of issues that includes poverty, domestic, love, angst, corruption, and existential angst.

Yet, for all its weaknesses, the film is a deceptively super-feral but affords its viewers and opportunity—explanation of—one's struggle to face solitude and his need to find contentment, joy and meaning in a seemingly unfeeling and uncaring world.

Indeed, happiness—not only to artistic fulfillment for people who stubbornly refuse to be it fill their heads.

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6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
7 LAKE HOUSE
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY
9 LOVE WRECKED
10 SEE NO EVIL

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6 LOVE WRECKED
7 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2

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5 SEE NO EVIL
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8 I WANNA BE HAPPY

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2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
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6 INITIAL D

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2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
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2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LOVE WRECKED

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2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 SEE NO EVIL
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 LAKE HOUSE
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

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2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

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2 BATAS MILITAR
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4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
1 TAKE THE LEAD
2 BATAS MILITAR
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
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6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2

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1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 SEE NO EVIL
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 THE RUN
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LAKE HOUSE

Pirates invade Glorietta 4 Cinema's with M&M's® Yo-Ho! A weekend of Pirate Escapades

Master Foods Philippines, Inc. makers of M&M's® Chocolate candies, together with Ayala Malls Cinema and Ibarra Vista International, invite you to a weekend of Pirate Escapades on July 15 and 16 at the Glorietta 4 cinema lobby from 12nn to 7pm. Enjoy a weekend of pure pirate fun and adventure as we celebrate the Philippine movie release of Walt Disney Pictures' Pirates of the Caribbean 2:Dead Man's Chest.

Set your sights to the huge pirate ship display, get a chance to find a treasure in the cave, challenge the people in the village, watch divers from aerobars, illusionists, jugglers and many more. Come in your pirate's costume and get a chance to win exciting prizes.

A swashbuckling fun-filled adventure awaits the whole family, so come on join the *Yo-Ho!* fun you have!

(MPI)

Auspicious TV comeback for Susan Roces

By Hector U. Torre

NOW THAT THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY has become much more competitive than it used to be, our leading networks have been unveiling new shows on a monthly basis. Debuting toward the end of the month is one of the biggest new programs in terms of casting, the Channel 2 sitcom, "John En Shirley."

The new sitcom explores the earlier troika of Dolphy, Susan Roces and Manuel Luzano as stars, Jo (for Joaquin) and Shirley, respectively.

Casting coup

The show's lead credits are a major casting coup, especially in Susan's case, because the already popular star has become an even big-

MOPS. Back to doing what she does best.

ger personality since she became the heiress of her late husband, Fernando Poe Jr.'s political work.

It's also been many years since Susan has faced the TV-film camera in an entertainment capacity, so viewers, especially the younger ones, will be making it a point to catch the show's first telecast on July 29, to see her characterize if the revered star still has what it takes as an actress. Of course, they won't be disappointed.

Signature character

As for Dolphy, he resumes playing his signature role of John, as viewers will want to see if, despite his advanced age, he still measures up to his past portrayal of his signature character.

As in the past, Dolphy and Manuel play father and daughter. This time around, Marivel (as Shirley) is married, and Susan is her mother-in-law.

In the old "John and Marsha," John kept fighting and feuding with his own mother-in-law, the meta-yaya Jinky Jolliffe, played by Dely Atay-atayan.

The new relationship between John and his ananin-angered mother-in-law was one the Web sitcom's funniest running gags, so it's interesting to see that the new show has upgraded the format to a running battle between Dolphy and Susan's characters.

Combustible situation

In that kind of continually combustible situation, Marivel's character runs the risk of being increasingly upstaged, so we trust that the actress will do her best to get her own comedic licks in, to keep up with her new living-under co-stars.

Incidentally, we know that...aside from this new TV show, Susan was recently offered a stellar role in a film, but she opted to pass on it.

Had she accepted, her show biz comeback would have been even bigger, with both TV and movie offshoots heralding her most auspicious return.

Not to worry, though. "John En Shirley" is certainly big enough, so Susan's fans, both old and new, can cheerfully celebrate their favorite actress' decision to go back to doing what she loves best!

DOLPHY and Marivel Soriano complete new sitcom's stellar troika.

'Master Class'

From page A6-3

Dance competition, July 15, Cheering at Dawn, Miraclers, parade, anniversary program, Sublayan Night, Dinio sa Kalye, and Lights and Sound Showdown with fireworks display.

Movies on TV

On ABS-CBN, today at 8 a.m., "BFF," Tomorrow at 8 a.m., "Back to the Future." July 17 at 9 p.m., "Spanglish." July 18 at 5:30 p.m., "Home Front." July 19 at 10:30 p.m., "Taking the Dog." July 20 at 11:15 a.m., "Before Sunset." July 21 at 9 p.m., "Jerry Maguire."

On Cinema, today at 9:30 a.m., "Sir and Anna." Tomorrow at 6:30 a.m., "The Golden Jerry Wales." July 17 at 9:25 p.m., "Mystic River." July 18 at 5:30 p.m., "The Last Samurai." July 19 at 11 p.m., "The Adventures of Brisco County Jr." July 20 at 2:05 p.m., "Dracula." July 21 at 8:30 a.m., "Born Yesterday."

JOLIE. Her experiences as UN ambassador have changed her view of the world.

SATURDAY Special

Angelina puts fame to good use

By Christine Brenda Balce

WHERE WERE YOU LAST JUNE 21 at 4:45 p.m.? Leaving [illegible] on the TV set watching CNN, anticipating Angelina Jolie Pitt's interview with Anderson Cooper's newscast. It was a special television because, that day, CNN devoted 45 entire programming to World Refugee Day—and Cooper's guest was Angelina Jolie, who has put her fame to good use by calling attention to humanitarian causes.

She agreed to the exclusive one-on-one interview just five days after she gave birth to Shiloh Nouvel Pitt. She and she-was-fired, looked sleep-and-was still starring for today—but, she still looked radiant! In fact, she is even more beautiful now than she's ever been!

SPREAD A4-5

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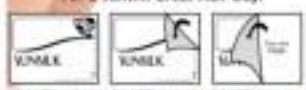

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Kris, Claudine test luck in 'Sukob'

By Remy M. Limcaoco

CHITO RONA'S LATEST FILM, "SUKOB," focuses on the old superstitious belief that a series of misfortunes is bound to happen to a family if one of its members gets hitched right after the death of a loved one, or if two siblings marry in the same year.

The movie brings Kris Aquino and Claudine Barretto together for the first time. Coincidentally, both popular actresses got married this year.

"Sukob" also stars Leonardo Abaloz, Bruno Mauricio, Ghendi Ramos, Bernard Palanca, Jhong Hilario, Gloria de Castro and Maja Salvador. We asked some of the movie's lead players if they believed in superstition.

AQUINO AND BARRETTO: Both popular actresses got married this year.

Habit

It is ironic she believes in things that bring good luck. "Every Monday, I wear a red or pink outfit because those colors are considered lucky. The practice has become a habit.

"I used to be very superstitious—I wouldn't go to functions that ended at bad luck. But, gradually, I've changed that. If you believe in God, why doubt His power?"

Claudine doesn't believe that a member of the family will experience misfortune if two siblings tie the knot in the same year. She and Raymart were supposed to get married just a few months after Claudine's sister tied the knot, but the couple decided to postpone the ceremony.

But, superstition had nothing to do with their decision. The actress simply didn't want the two weddings to be compared and didn't want intrigue to tarnish their special moments.

"I have nothing against believing in omens and lucky charms; we grow up believing in them. But, I am more into believing what the bible says," she explains.

Like his fat movie, "Pera Mol," Bello does an element that tackles the supernatural. Does he believe in them?

"On the contrary I don't. The endgame to humor, my home province, are comical. I don't believe in things that defy logic. But, as entertainers here, they spell magic at the box office," the diminutive talents.

Rather than being contrary, Bernard Palanca is challenged by the danger superstitious bring. He wears Friday the 13th as he would any other Friday.

Generation

On the other hand, veteran actress Boots Anson-Roa doesn't take superstitions lightly. She insisted. "There are beliefs that have been handed down from one generation to the next. They're a part of our lives and lore." Boots has seen unexplained phenomena happen, but she believes that everything happens for a reason.

Popularity over ability on 'Shall We Dance?'

By Nestor U. Torre

TWO SUNDAYS AGO, ABS-CBN's "Shall We Dance?" show unveiled its latest batch of celebrity contestants and their respective partners. The four luminaries included rare recording artist Sheena and Michael Flores, and rare celebrity newbies to the dance floor, comedienne Wilma Doesnon and basketball star Asi Taulava.

As expected, Sheena, Michael and their respective partners did best of all. Wilma didn't do badly, either, but she was conspicuously trounced by rest.

TAULAVA: Star-value worked in his favor.

Towering concert

We say unexpectedly, because Asi didn't do much dancing at all, because of his height and girth, he was limited to rather minimal dance movements, and mainly acted as towering counterpart to his partner, who did most of the actual dancing.

Surprisingly, however, the show's judges gave Asi and his partner relatively high marks, and their team survived the show's first cut.

Last Sunday, the teams of Sheena, Michael and Asi once again strutted their stuff for the judges and host-emcee tandem of Regine Velasquez and Rodjun Cruz, and the results were replaced by a downright amazing outcome.

Sheena survived, but not Asi and his partner debuted the most unexpected Michael. In fact, the world-renowned Filipino singer did that solo team had gotten the best marks of all!

How could this have happened, unless Asi obviously did relatively minimal dancing? Most likely, his star value as a popular and admired basketball player worked in his favor with text-voters. In addition, they must have been disarmed, as were the judges, by Asi's determination to do well in a field that was entirely new to him.

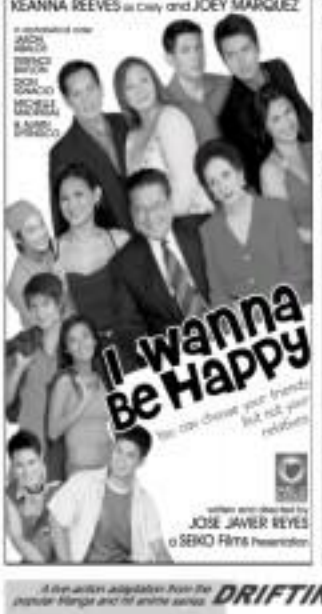
This is understandable, but we must point out that "Shall We Dance?" is a dance-ability, not a popularity competition, so the winners should be the best dancers, period. Otherwise, consider the program "Shall We Shine?," and be done with it.

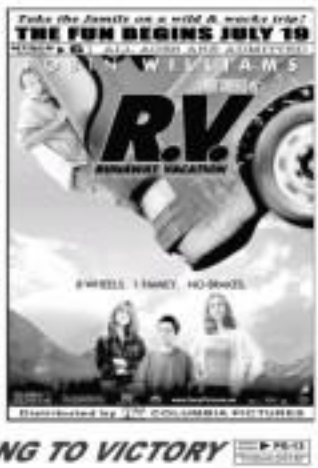
We must caution that are aren't aiming to see Taulava with a positive result, we simply want the program to live up to its billing as a dance competition, and not as a popularity contest. Or else, the most popular nominee wins.

Key considerations

We, too, is charming, engaging, makes no bones about his "inexperience" and he does do his best. But these plus factors shouldn't overwhelm the key considerations of dancing ability, interpretation, verve and flourish.

Tomorrow night, "Shall We Dance?" will be one-act show. The plot discloses: Will Asi hold twenty-two fibrous again through sheer dint of popularity, likability and "Aral Ko Eibol"? Will he finally do some real dancing for a change? And, how will the final song go?





Angelina puts . . .

Pronunciado A2-1

I was confused on the screen when she talked about her other interests in life—adopting children (she already has two adopted kids, Maddox and Zahara, and plans to adopt another one soon), and performing her role as UN ambassador.

Angelina travels at her own expense, reaches out to impoverished communities, and touches people's lives the shares how her experiences as UN Ambassador have changed her view of the world.

Desperate plight

Many of us are not aware of the desperate plight of refugees all over the world. Families have been driven out of their homes and squeezed from their lands, made homeless over war and politics. Women and children are the most affected.

In Cooper's report, he detailed his heartbreaking experiences in famine-stricken Africa. Through his tears, we can see helpless children died of hunger.

Ironically, I was watching the touching CNN coverage while I was tending to my sick daughter, who was confined at St. Luke's Hospital.

It's a reminder me of how blessed I am. If my child gets sick, I have the means to bring her to a good hospital, and I don't have to worry because she is under the care of her physicians, Dr. Rima Enriquez. My baby got sick because of something she ate. Elsewhere in the world, children fall ill and die because they have nothing to eat.

But, we don't have to look far. People also die of hunger in this country. In the flying barriers, poor families helplessly watch their children suffer, because they're too poor to bring their children to hospitals. Perhaps Angelina should include our country in her itinerary . . .

Numbing effect

So, whether we see it on a newscast or hear about it from famous people like Angelina, we are always exposed to the realities of poverty and hunger. But they have become a "common" sight, and this has had a numbing effect on some people's sensibilities.

But...stop! They should also remind us that we are all connected as human beings, regardless of race. We are connected by our common needs: Clean food, water and basic conditions, and good health.

We should not name the food on our plates. We should be more generous in sharing our resources with those who need them.

We can help build homes through Bahay Kalinga, or we can emulate Angelina by either adopting parentless children, or donating a part of our income to charity.

First pictures

Julie announced in Cooper that she gives a third of her income to her causes. And she donated to charity the $4 million People magazine paid her for the first pictures of her daughter.

"Yes, we need more Angelinas. But, even without her megabucks, we too can make a difference. Always remember: From little acts of kindness can go a long way!

JOLIE: Shares her blessings with the less fortunate.

'Pirates' sequel is inventive but clunky

By Noelan Tore

IF NOT FOR ITS IN-ventive, mass-see-on-the-big-screen set design, prosthetics and special effects, it would be tempting to advise would-be viewers to just wait for the video release of "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest."

Like its predecessor, "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl," the film's second installment is clunky, overlong and burdened with an unnecessarily complicated plot.

Devious and subversive

On the plus side, it still features Johnny Depp as the irresponsibly devious and subversive Captain Jack Sparrow, whose presence keeps the movie afloat. There are times, though, when you sense that even he is getting tired of it.

Still helmed by Gore Verbinski, the movie takes off where "Black Pearl" ended, and finishes where the third installment—"Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End"—will begin.

The tagline is "Captain Jack is back," but Depp's star's the only familiar face in the cast, also returning are Orlando Bloom and Keira Knightley as the now-engaged Will Turner and Elizabeth Swann; Jack Davenport as Commodore Norrington, and Jonathan Pryce as Governor Swann.

New additions to the ensemble are Stellan Skarsgård as Bootstrap Bill (Will Turner's father), Naomie Harris as the sultry Tia Dalma, and the wonderful Bill Nighy as Davy Jones, the legendary bad guy of the sea, whose locker is where mariners' souls supposedly go.

The story follows the classic chase/quest pattern, with endless convoluted people going after a certain object...in this case, the dead Man's Chest—and getting in each other's way.

Humor

Jack is after the chest to save his soul from Davy Jones; Elizabeth and Will want it so that they can avoid the gallows; Davy Jones wants it because, well, it's his; the register wants it so that he can redeem his honor, and the East India Trading Co. (yes, they actually tried to insert politics into this yarn) wants it so that it can control the currency.

The scale is epic—and so is the length. Unfortunately, the story can't go the distance.

The movie lightens up in some serious sequences—the bit where Jack becomes a child actor is inspired—and whenever Jack traipses into a scene. But, as a whole, it's waterlogged. And, it sinks in the end, when the audience is not given a satisfactory ending—a ploy to get us to watch next year's final installment.

DEPP AND BLOOM. Back onboard Disney's popular adventure franchise.

Homecoming concert, CD celebrate the Madz' latest victory

By Sharon Rabao-Macasaet

FRESH FROM RACKING THE coveted grand prize in the recently concluded Pinoy Dream Academy competition in France, the Philippine Madrigal Singers—or The Madz—have released "Serenades," the acclaimed group's new album under Sony BMG, which should delight choral music enthusiasts.

How is "Serenades" different from their previous collections? For one, the aptly titled compilation is The Madz's first inspirational album. It showcases international renditions of well-known church and praise songs we only hear on Sunday mass.

Compositions

The 14-track album contains, among others, popular compositions of noted composers priest, Fr. Manding Francisco, S.J.

At the group's homecoming concert at the CCP last Tuesday, The Madz sang their favorite cuts from the recording and wowed the crowd with their moving renditions. The stirring performances prompted many members of the audience—including us—to troop to the Main Theater lobby to get a copy of the CD after the show.

To begin with, Francisco's "Sa 'Yo Lamang," a simple, sweet song, has always been a beautiful piece. But the Madz's rendition gives it more soul, and turned it into a moving love song that deeply affirms one's faithfulness and devotion to the Supreme Being. Ditto for the equally popular "Hosiannina."

THE MADZ...First inspirational album.

Notable track

Another notable track, "Sus Faire Mo Up," reaches the apex and lifts the sweet soul. Excerpts for "Misli Kita Mahlimuyo" and "Lapu," which are accompanied by a guitar, most of the songs in the album are sung a cappella.

The track listing also includes "I Will Sing Forever," "Kainis Christ," "Pasalamgin sa Pagiging Bukas-Palad," "Ikot ng Pagbabangad" and "Light of a Million Mornings."

An album like "Serenades" is usually associated with church-based choirs, but this particular collection is a welcome treat in time of the acclaimed group.

Versatility

The Madz is known for versatility and vocal range. The new album gives popular church hymns the distinct Madrigal sound that has won the group accolades worldwide.

The recording is a musical celebration of faith, love and true devotion to the Creator. The CD today creates, "Serenamantine" in spires listeners to partake of the blessings of music—the most beautiful kind of spirituality there is. "It does exactly that.

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ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Activity Center
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Strong start for

By Nestor U. Torre

CHANNEL 23 NOW HAS ITS NEWSCAST "Bandila," name we strong shaking its debut telecast last July 3, when it became the first TV channel to air Gen. Danilo Lim's video-taped withdrawal of support from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last February.

The late evening newscast anchored by Korina Sanchez, Cris Evdaia and Henry Omaga-Diaz took full advantage of its scoop, and presented more pa of the tape with compelling visuals and telling that Arroyo underscored the drama inherent in the lunchbox-sized material.

Ratings

As a result, the half-hour newscast didn't have much left for its other news competitors—no Cornelio Cornucopias' hors, ten, Sandy Madrigal, Isabella Marcos nursing TV, another roommate scaled by Filipinos, and the record-breaking TV outings of the Pinoy-Pinoy Ako Bisaya reality show.

Lucky for the newscast.

A "Sa Hati Ko" portion had former Comelec Chairman Christian Monsod weighing in on voluble vote counts. This new feature is welcome, because it serves as a "clinical editorial" that shows how included Filipinos feel about a current issue. The newscast's brief background on the Philippine flag was similarly appreciated.

On the debit side, there was only one brief foreign news report, on a train accident in Spain. But, the program's first telecast vaulted up to the plus side, boosted up as it was by the Gen. Lim scoop.

Projection

We also appreciated the way that the anchors were relatively low-key in tone and projection. And we were grateful for the fact that ABS-CBN was the first outlet ever to bring its late evening newscast back from midnight to the 10:30-slot. What will GMA-7 follow?

We also caught the newscast on Tuesday and Wednesday last week, and noted that it was still following up on Ex-Gen. Lim scoop. That was understandable—but we wondered how the newscast would follow up on it when—if—major scoop to pump up its adrenaline, and ratings.

At the moment, we note that the newscast continues to pay total attention to Foreign news, and we wish it wouldn't take this tack, because viewers need to know, and just how the country goes, in the scheme of things.

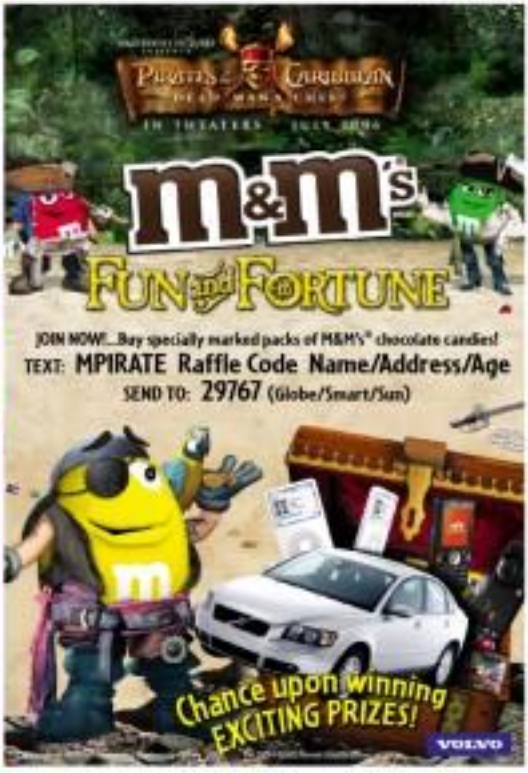
We also wonder why news anchor lunches is reserved in the studio, while Evdaia and Lim report from the newsroom.

Greater depth

In addition, we hope that, aside from describing technical news bits, the newscast would also go into greater depth when it comes to reporting on selected events or topics.

And that the production's transitions doesn't call too much attention to itself, but is more purposefully used to point out the most superb announcements that happen.

Finally, we note that, last week, the newscast did a remembrance of an event as part of its report. We wish that the production remains itself from doing this again. While a remembrance provides "atmosphere" and "drama" when no actual footage is available, newscasts should rigorously be about events, not recreations of events.



Success is sweet for Kate Hudson

LOS ANGELES—Kate Hudson is belie—and she knows it. But, the 27-year-old actress' success is her relatively short Hollywood career has been hard earned, even for the daughter of a popular Hollywood star.

She appears on screen again in the romantic comedy, "You, Me and Dupree," starring Owen Wilson and Matthew.

Hudson is the daughter of Goldie Hawn ("Private Benjamin"), who raised her with long time companion, Kurt Russell, a veteran of more than 40 years to show biz.

Nominations

She earned an Oscar nomination for best supporting actress in her first big role in a major film, "Almost Famous." It all sounds like it came on easy, it didn't.

After "Almost Famous," Russell told Hudson that, she suggested her screen, she might consider to perhaps four movies in which she would have a quality role—if. That is, she were lucky. Hudson said she is happy to have had at least one. Reuters

BUSINESS
Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Stocks plunge as oil surges to new highs

Middle East crisis casts gloom on global markets

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LOCAL STOCK PRICES fell sharply yesterday, spooked by a surge in world oil prices to record highs following the eruption of hostilities in the Middle East.

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index (see 31.42 points, or 2.3 percent, to close at 1,318.31 after rising 1.3 percent Thursday.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. led the decline, dropping 4.4 percent to close at P1,980.44, lowering the 2.4-percent decline in the company's American Depositary Receipts in New York Thursday.

"The market will have to really assess how world political leaders will resolve the geopolitical situation. In the next coming days, we may see deterioration trading," said Grace Cardenas, head of operations of local brokerage house 2TradeAsia.

Oil prices surged to a new high of $38.26 a barrel amid concerns about intensifying fighting between Israel and Lebanon, explosions at Nigerian oil installations and the ongoing diplomatic standoff between the West and Iran over its nuclear program.

Raul Joseph Concio, chief investment officer at ING investment management, said traded investment would continue to be dictated by developments overseas.

"If oil doesn't go up to $100 a barrel overnight, then it won't have much of an impact on the economy. I don't expect the economy to get into recession. But we can expect a slowdown in consumer spending," he said.

ING investment expects Philippine gross domestic product to grow between 5 and 5.4 percent this year.

STOCKS B9

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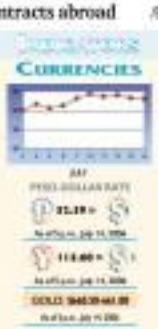

Banks' bad loan ratio improves

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE COMMERCIAL BANKS' BAD loans dropped to 7.30 percent of total loans at end-May, the lowest level since the Asian currency turmoil in 1997, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The non-performing loan ratio for May was an improvement from the 8.08 percent in April as banks reduced their soured assets and expanded their total loan portfolio from the previous month's levels.

The banking system's loan NPL ratio shrank by 3.39 percentage points from the 10.93 percent in end-May last year.

The 20 universal and commercial banks trimmed their bad loans by 6.51 percent or P9.83 billion to P141.13 billion in the month of May due to NPL sales, write-offs and loan settlements as well as an increase in some exempted loans the non-performing classification under a new BSP circular.

For instance, NPLs went down by P1.3 billion as a result of rehabilitation and P0.74 billion due to asset disposals.

Meanwhile, the checking system's total loan portfolio grew to P1.92 trillion from P1.87 trillion a month ago.

Exclusive of inter-bank loans, the industry's NPL ratio likewise dropped to 5.67 percent from the previous month's 9.77 percent and the year ago's 13.04 percent.

Meanwhile, restructured loans slid to 3.1 percent as a ratio of total loan portfolio. As of the period, 46.71 percent of total restructured loans had a maturity one year.

A debt restructuring can cover a whole range of debt restructures—including the restructuring out of maturities and lowering of interest rates—to give the borrower chance to revive its business.

The commercial bank sector's total non-performing assets—referring to the sum of NPLs and real and other properties owned and acquired (ropoa)—eased to 7.97 percent in end-May from 8.56 percent a month ago. These NPAs were valued at P224.09 billion.

Ropoas alone amounted to P9.82.31 billion, accounting for 4.71 percent of gross assets.

On the other hand, the banking sector's NPL and NPA coverage ratios fell to 77.43 percent and 40.15 percent, respectively, from 78.33 percent and 41.4 percent a month ago as the reduction in loan-loss reserves overwhelmed the decline in NPLs.

Masinloc teaches hard lesson: Supply deals must first be secured

By Abigail L. Ho

THE POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES Management Group (PSALM) should first secure power supply contracts with power distributors—particularly, with The Lopez-led Manila Electric Co.—before proceeding with the sale of the National Power Corp.'s generation assets.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, also a member of the PSALM board, said this was a lesson caught by the troublesome sale of the 600-megawatt (MW) Masinloc coal-fired power plant in Zambales, which was sold as a merchant plant—without an attached power supply contract.

"The failure of the Masinloc sale, ang Subic (PSB) (Pacific Consortium Inc.) is to secure a power supply contract underscores the importance of concluding negotiations between Napocor and electric distributors for power supply contracts prior to bidding, as stipulated in (Energy Secretary Angelo) Reyes's draft (circular) of 2006)," Neri said in a statement.

"PSB's contract with PEMEDCO at Masinloc is in danger of being terminated. The group must cough up the $225-million down payment for the plant on or before Aug. 5, the end of the 30-day grace period before contract termination.

The consortium had failed to meet the June 20 deadline for the settlement of the down payment prompting PSALM to forfeit the $14-million performance bond that TSN had put up for the plant.

Three months prior to June, Malaysian conglomerate Ranhill Berhad came into the picture as TSN's white knight, eventually offering to buy out the TSN partners for $6-million.

But the Malaysian firm said that for the contract to be renegotiated, a power supply contract with Meralco must first be guaranteed sale.

But "PSB negotiators (failed) to get Meralco to enter into a bilateral supply deal with it.

Neri said should Iligandee be placed on the auction block again it is merchant plant, the same problem would be encountered.

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SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Issuance of Eligibility and Bidding Documents	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Envelopes
July 17 to July 28, 2006	July 20, 2006	August 01, 2006
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM to 2:00 PM
GIBAC Secretariat (Staff 4/F), Financial Center Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Makati Room (4th Floor, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Makati Room (4th Floor, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Blvd., Pasay City

Fixed rate of declining rates: August 2, 2006, the minimum acceptable base support of 130% of the MTN rating terms. The highest acceptable rate for the Philippine Stock Exchange Index (PSEI) Index is minimum rating of "BB+" rating or "very good financial strength" based on risk based rating or the equivalent rating from any acceptable rating company in the insurance market industry as of Dec. 31, 2005 with the risk of Participants having a minimum "B" rating or "good financial strength" (based on risk based rating) or the equivalent rating from any acceptable rating company in the insurance market industry as of December 31, 2005, attaching copies (CERTIFIED/NOTARIZED/AUTHENTICATED) of the instrument(s) duly before the bidding date.

Eligibility and bid documents shall be issued to applicants upon filing of a Letter of Intent to Apply and payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of PHP5,000.00 in the form of Cash or Manager's Check in favor of GSIS.

All participants undergo a Eligibility Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of the sufficiency of Bid Security, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of existing laws, rules and regulations. Only applicants who paid bid fees shall be allowed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference and submit Bid proposals.

The GSIS thru the GIBAC reserves the right to reject any and all bids and/or part thereof, or waive any defect contained therein and may accept the offer which it deems the lowest evaluated responsive bid.

July 15, 2006, Pasay City, Philippines

(Original Signed)
Estrella F. Elamparo
GIBAC Chairman

Gov't seen to post surplus for 3rd consecutive month

Reenacted budget puts gov't way ahead of target

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE GOVERNMENT LIKELY POSTED another budget surplus in June due to Congress' failure to pass the proposed national budget for 2006, which reinstated spending.

June would mark the third consecutive month that the government would post a surplus. The government recorded a cash surplus of P17.6 billion in April and P5.8 billion in May.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said a month of the government's fiscal performance in June would be released on Monday. But he said the budget figure indicated a surplus rather than a deficit.

The anticipated positive fiscal performance in June would place the government well ahead of its target of posting a P121-billion budget deficit for the entire year.

In the January-to-May period, the deficit stood at only P44.2 billion, keeping the government on track of the full-year target.

With a surplus in June, the deficit figure for the first six months of the year would therefore be even lower.

The government has been struggling to put its fiscal house in order. It was able to post surpluses in the past months largely because it operated on the reenacted 2005 budget.

Under the 2005 budget, the government's expenditure program should only be limited to P515.8-9 billion. This is P120 billion lower than the P1.050-trillion supposed national budget for this year.

The Department of Finance earlier said that while the failure to pass the proposed P1.006 budget would bring relief to boost economic growth, it failed to have a positive impact on the government's fiscal position.

Moreover, the government is catching up to its goal of increasing its revenue collection this year from last year's, causing on a reenacted budget—which prohibits growth in spending—would mean the attainment of a deficit that is much lower than what is set in the 2006 program.

Under the 2006 program, the deficit is supposed to settle at P121 billion.

But economists said the deficit for the entire 2006 might only reach as low as P48 billion because of the reenacted budget.

The bicameral conference committee on the budget failed to pass the proposed national budget for 2006 before the legislature went into recess last month due to a deadlock between the Senate and the House of Representatives.

While the House of Representatives wanted the proposed P1,054-trillion budget passed, the Senate wanted a substantial cut and was pushing for a budget of only P1.027 trillion.

Among the projects slashed down by the Senate were the "Kilos Asenso Movement" and the "Kalusugan Barangay" programs, which the Arroyo administration said involved infrastructure development.

Although technically Congress can still pass the 2006 budget when it resumes session later this month, as election rules that it should already be in the hustings for the proposed 2007 national budget.

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NTC sees boom in radio ID tags for retail use

By Daniel L. Lucas

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission (NTC) sees a boom in the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) tags for local business and government applications as regulators prepare to release guidelines on the new technology.

In separate interviews, NTC Deputy Commissioner Jorge V. Sunmiguel said he expects the technology to be widely adopted by both the public and private sectors, given its potential for making transactions more efficient.

"This will be big business," he said. "And (the NTC) intends to promote significant presence by local companies in the sector."

RFID systems use tiny chips and wireless antennas that can be imbedded into products and used for identification purposes.

Popular RFID devices already in use locally include radio tags and barcodes to access to prevent shoplifting, and so-called e-Pass devices on board cars that regularly ply the South Super Highway toll system.

Sunmiguel also predicted that the technology will be widely adopted by the Bureau of Customs due to its far-ahead features in the movement and customs of containers coming into the country's ports.

Digitel cleared for new IDD billing system

By Rica T. Olchondra

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission (NTC) has approved the proposal of Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc. (Digitel) to offer per pulse charging for its international direct dialing (IDD) service, instead of the previous per minute system.

Based on the former system, users were billed only for successful calls and according to the time consumed.

Under the present pricing scheme, users will be charged $0.005 per pulse, or for every outgoing signal. This translates to $0.06 per minute. With the new rate, users will get to save half of the previous $0.10 charge per minute.

The NTC found that the rates complied with the provisions of Sec 7(c), also known as the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines.

Digitel senior vice president for legal services William L. Fernandez said that the user of its Isumatel Mobility Inc. will now start supporting their own and have a full begin switching to the new pricing system.

This development is expected to boost Digitel's efforts to court more subscribers in the broadband business.

As of end-2004, Digitel had 413,018 subscribers, or a market share of 12 percent.

IT firms clinch million-dollar contracts abroad

SOMETHING FISHY GOES ON IN SOROCCON TOWN

A fishmonger sorts out her wares for sale in the town of Magallanes, located in the southernmost part of Sorsogon. The trading of dried fish is one of the major sources of livelihood for residents of this seaside town.

RP food exporters also posted millions in sales

By Roneel N. Dayanga

LOCAL INFORMATION TECHnology firms clinched contracts worth a total of $6.2 million in a trade fair held in Singapore, while food exporters posted sales of up to $13.4 million in an international exhibit in Hong Kong, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Trade Undersecretary Ibrahim Agreda-Mayo said the IT firms' performance in last month's Communicasia 2008 showed they held in the midst of value-added services like creative content in mobile phones.

"We hyped our in Communicasia, to think the fields is not just in the hardware but also in the creative content that can be added to mobile phones and what can consequently increase subscriber base," Mayo said.

Companies that joined Communicasia this year included Globe Asia, Infocentrum, Globe Telecom, Inc., Accel Communications, IconLoop.ph, Mammoth Technologies, One Connect International, Philippine Long Distance Telephone, and Smart Communications.

"We are proud to have highlighted our mobile wireless applications from instant messaging and phone wallets to IT infrastructure and technology in Communicasia this year," Mayo said. "Our wireless companies are going to be major contributors in making our presence felt in the global market."

During the show, Globe Telecom was cited as Mobile Operators Asia, Millennium Globe Telecom, Inc., Accel Communications, IconLoop.ph, Mammoth Technologies, One Connect International, Philippine Long Distance Telephone, and Smart Communications.

"We are proud to have highlighted our mobile wireless applications from instant messaging and phone wallets to IT infrastructure and technology in Communicasia this year," Mayo said. "Our wireless companies are going to be major contributors in making our presence felt in the global market."

During the show, Globe Telecom was cited as Mobile Operators of the Year by the Asia Mobile News Awards, while Bolux Investment in Indonesia credited Globe Asia's messaging applications as one of the factors that led to Bolux's growth as a leading content provider in Indonesia.

Also, the ICT and 22 small and medium-sized enterprises exhibited $10.4 million during the International Food Exhibition (IFE) held last June at the World Trade Center.

The IFE organized this served as the culminating activity of the Integrated Program for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises which the Bangko Sentral hosted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"We hope that with this program, we can increase the number of food exporters," Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said.

Business Briefs

Help for agri facilities

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA) allocates a third of its research funds, currently estimated at P1.5 billion, to help finance post-harvest facilities and modernization projects.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said the DA's development office for formality signed an agreement with United States officials led by Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney yesterday. The agreement provides for the allocation of some $8,000 each in form of cooperative aid from the United States.

The Philippine government, through the National Food Authority, will in turn sell the global wheat. Since the NFA has no private facilities and can thus provide the agricultural standards, Panganiban said the proceeds would go to research and development activities funding to help farmers increase their yields. **Cristina A. Enriquez**

Telco sets sight on provinces

SMART TELECOMMUNICATIONS INC. (SMART) on Friday asked the National Telecommunications Commission to extend its landline license to operate in areas outside Metro Manila for another three years. The license will then expire on July 25.

The Benpres Holdings Corp. unit filed the request through legal counsel Ariel R. Tabayan. It appeared, the company is not seeking authority to lay any new local landline connections in the areas. Its existing wired facilities will be retained up to July 25, 2008.

Buyer Tel wants to retain the provinces of Aurora, Isabela, Bataan, Mountain Province, Nueva Vizcaya, Zambales and Ifugao, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Sarangani and Surigao del Sur. **Ayn Z. Jimenez**

PDEX secures SRO status

THE PHILIPPINE DEALING & EXCHANGE CORP. (PDEX), the country's third licensed securities exchange, has received a self-regulatory organization (SRO) status from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

By becoming an SRO, PDEX could begin to operate its own rules.

Regulatory over the development is a major issue in the capital market, which only in part it against alleged price-fixing in government securities, sources said.

In an order issued on Thursday, the SEC said PDEX's application to attain SRO status was approved by the commission en banc on July 8.

PDEX, which has a paid-up capital of P100 million, is controlled by the Bankers Association of the Philippines.

"What is heartbreaking about this development is that there is a republic to focus on this aspect of the market," BAP executive director Leonardo Cornelio said. "Any automation of price fixing is tempting to happen under the aegis of an SRO like PDEX." **Elizabeth L. Angeles**

IP-Converge secures loan

IP-CONVERGE, A SUBSIDIARY OF PUBLICLY listed technology firm IPVG Corp., is securing a $10,000 loan from Export and Industry Bank to fund the expansion of its international data center in BGC Plaza in Makati.

The loan can be a guarantee from the state-owned Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency (Philexim).

The loan will fund the operation and expansion of an Internet data center (IDC) owned and operated by IP Converge, a registered firm of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT).

As a Pldt registered firm, it offers business key solutions. The data center expansion is scheduled to be completed by the third quarter. This is expected to increase IP Converge's clients to 100 by the end of this year, from the current 50 clients. (Pls is no point information other Commercial Jules. (Ed/cbb)

The planned data center occupies one floor of the PSBC Plaza. **Elizabeth L. Angeles**

Highlands Prime hikes capital

LEISURE HOMES DEVELOPER HIGHLANDS Prime Inc. (HPI), majority-owned by the SM Group, is doubling its capital to P4 billion to meet increasing project.

In a disclosure, HPI said it was calling a special shareholders' meeting on Aug. 11 to approve the increase in its capital stock to P4 billion from P2 billion.

Out of this increase, HPI will issue P2 billion worth of preferred shares.

HPI is spending roughly P1.5 billion over the next two years to finish key projects in Tagaytay.

Expected to be completed this year is The Redwood Tagaytay Midlands. The project is worth a little over P500 million.

Another major project, Redwood The Wood Ridge Park, costs roughly P700 to P800 million.

The Redwood Ridge Park is targeted for completion by the end of 2009. **Elizabeth L. Angeles**

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Lito Cesar O. Pangyarihan

Experts who make a living peering into warm (and cold) bodies

By Tess R. Salazar

DR. MA. CECILIA F. LIM has a job that would make ordinary mortals' stomachs turn. As a forensic pathologist, she wants to go into the nitty-gritty of everything—well, almost everything—that makes humans tick.

Sometimes, she has a dead body to her hands and, for the benefit of everyone still living, she conducts an autopsy on the cadaver to make it reveal its pathological secrets. Other times, the focus is still living human crying out for justice in a rape case, for instance, she can correlate the findings of a criminal investigator team with her own physical examination of the victim and, if present, of the suspected rapist.

Lim believes that evidence doesn't lie. After her examinations, criminal investigators can come still through the necessary clue for whatever detective and prosecutor the truth based on her scientific evaluation.

'Quality control'

And rapists, in particular, are suspected of "getting justice" to the deceased's next-of-kin prior to death, according to Lim. An autopsy is a form of "quality control" to the medical field would know if the doctor's initial diagnosis was correct, and if the treatment given was appropriate.

"For instance, there's a new drug or there's not confidence that it's really safe, more, how would a doctor know that the drug doesn't work anymore? The answer can be found in an autopsy," she asserts.

Lim does get involved in clinical stage of medical procedures. However, fortunately for her the only field where pathologists make their presence felt, before-plain can also get involved in laboratory work, the results of which are often the bases of doctors' programs of treatment for their patients.

Indeed, pathologists can be the "doctor's doctors" playing a big role for your friendly family doctor or specialist. When a urologist needs to have samples examined, when a surgeon needs to have a biopsy of a breast mass, when a pediatrician needs to have blood samples examined for possible leukemia cells, they need the expertise of pathologists. You need not be a pathologist, but they may know more of you than you do yourself, or perhaps even your family doctor does.

Imperfections

Pathology, however, as exact science is not many, is not 100 percent accurate. According to the pathologists present in the forum, all were done in the laboratory have inherent accuracy levels in the diagnosis of a particular disease.

Dr. Jose Ma. Avila, past president of PAP and the current chair of the UP College of Medicine's Department of Pathology, admits that in these years in a subspecialization set, a 19-hour-a-day experience studying specimens under a microscope, mistakes are inevitable. What is important, he says, are the "clinical correlations" that make pathology reliable, precise, and trustworthy.

Sometimes, the inconsistencies are counselled before pathologists even have a chance to examine everything.

"One of the limitations of laboratory tests is a simple. Sometimes, it happens when the surgeon or doctors is unsure on publishing the case. Sometimes he can't tell a specimen and sends half to the hospital and the other half to somebody else. That is a very dangerous play and doctors should not play that game," says anatomical clinical pathologist Dr. Elizabeth E. Ancillano-Duque, a former chair of the Department of Pathology of UP college of Medicine.

As much as doctors rely on pathologists to provide them with the precise, scientific evaluations about a sample in question, pathologists rely on doctors to provide them the subtleties, as he-hidden history and clues about the specimen under scrutiny.

Addendum

LAST WEEK'S STORY "FIRMY HOPES to be the last Asean day to reach the Everest Summit" forgot to acknowledge the Philippine College of Physicians Health Forum held at Amelia's Mentor, Quezon City. The Inquirer regrets one of the esteemed guests during the event.

'The grapes of sleep'

DISCOVER
Maxine Santos Hadlon

FIRST A CORRECTION FROM the previous column regarding the development of a scanner-curtly sensor for robotic scanning: the description of the sensor not-selective use of an iridium-tin oxide (ITO) electrode but in fact the sensors uses an indium-tin oxide electrode.

That being said, this week's topic is more natural. Published online last June 19 in the Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture is a paper describing Italian researchers' recent finding of substances in certain grapes said to cure sleep.

8 grape varieties

Lead author Marcello Iriti and colleague Elena Maria Varoni from the University of Milan elaborated their work with plant pathologist Franco Faoro from the Istituto di Virologia Vegetale for this study, which looked at eight different varieties of grapes, including some with dark skins such as Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Nebbiolo and Sangiovese.

Iriti et al. also added a 9th sample: extracts of Merlot grapes from the same vineyard at the others but only the "seed" kind—removed with the help of antiochlorin (EPTH) to help make the plant more resistant to the fungus Botrytis cinerea.

This was not a whimsical choice: Iriti, Varoni and Faoro had previously collaborated on studies of EPTH-treated vines since the presence of the fungus can severely damage vines for the wine industry. Under the right conditions though, the fungus is welcomed because it can concentrate the sugars of the grapes and produce intensely sweet dessert wines such as sauternes.

Several techniques

Based on previous studies demonstrating how melatonin had been extracted from various plants, Iriti et al. tried several techniques to see which one would work best with grape skin. These experiments were each carried out three times using plastic from the same cultivar and the same approximate age. The antiseptic extraction was the most complex one which did not use EDTA but left that of seasame with two phenazo controls.

Iriti et al. found that the Bobbio grapes had the highest melatonin concentration, several times more than commercial grapes or the controls. Surprisingly the EPTA-treated Merlot vats also found to have higher concentrations of melatonin than many of the other grapes, suggesting that the chemical might also stimulate production of the hormone.

What makes this finding so interesting is that melatonin is usually thought of as a hormone produced by the pineal gland in the brain. Because its production in the body is correlated to the presence or absence of light, melatonin attempts to play a role in determining the body's circadian rhythms. For this reason, melatonin pills have been marketed as supplements for jet lag.

Sleep patterns

If melatonin is secreted by the brain to help establish a person's sleep patterns, and plants don't use the brain, then how do they secrete that hormone at all, did not actually find melatonin but possibly another chemical compound with similar structure and properties?

The authors seem to have taken the safest way around, noting that in 1996 melatonin was found to accumulate.

Subsequent studies have also found melatonin in plants such as rice, cornstarch, bananas, cauliflower, cherries, Chinese herbs and St. John's wort. And as in cucumbers, melatonin is synthesized by plants from tryptophan, an amino acid that in turn helps produce serotonin, which plays a role in determining a person's mood.

Additional proof of Iriti et al.'s findings could be obtained if a mosquito-sheavily-stocked lab did a study to see if the melatonin in grapes from the pineal gland does, i.e., can alter a person's sleep patterns, Iriti et al. are now working on finding out whether or not the endogenous concentrations in the grape skins extracts as high as in the fruit has been tested into wine. If so, this could help explain why red wine can act as a mild sedative, helping people unwind and fall asleep at the end of the day.

E-mail the author at rsasan@inquirer.com

Our new academicians

EUREKA!
Genevieve V. Love-Chua

WE NOW FACE THE PROBLEM not of too little information, but of too much.

Instead of guiding my students on how to look for facts, I know spend more time helping them critically evaluate them. Bear think about our Internet craze—the volume of stuff the government busts every day, including the ones we're using.

Dr. Eliezer Albacea of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños (UPLB) has dedicated himself to making agrowave more efficient in daily government and collection. After an MS in chemistry at MELSI, PHD, BAS or PWH, for instance, he has received that climate can simply download the information they need from computers, rather than queuing up personally at these places. I hope your Internet databases can soon become the norm rather than the exception.

Faster sorting

According to Albacea, about our quarter of all computer time is being eaten up by sorting through all the masses of data. With his LoopHopping simplexer, sorting can be done a lot faster. Optimal parallel algorithms are in the works, and sorting the UPLB campus with fiber optics has made communications easier. Albacea also works on liquid-by graphs, which can lead to the designs of more cost-effective and stronger circuits.

Rose in Bacolod City, Albacea received a degree in BS Computer Science from UPLB in 1982, a master's in Computing Science, with honors, from the University of Wollongong in New South Wales in 1985, and a doctorate in Computer Science from the Australian National University in Canberra. He has received many awards, among them the 2005 National Academy of Science & Technology (NAST) Third World Academy of Science Prize, the 2005 Philippine Business Council for Agriculture Award, and the 1997 DOST-Duo-standing Teacher Award.

Infectious diseases

Computer viruses are one thing. Infectious diseases another. Dr. Thelma Tupaz-Ramos is considered by many experts to be the foremost infectious disease expert focusing on tuberculosis in the country today. She has published more than 100 papers on tuberculosis and meningitis, 24 of which have been awarded by prestigious organizations.

Tupaz-Ramos is recognized nationally and internationally. She has been cited by journalists, women, council member) of the top medical specialty societies of the Philippines (Philippine College of Physicians—PCP; Society for Microbiology and Infectious Diseases) and international bodies (Western Pacific Society of Chemotherapy; International Society of Infectious Diseases) and is the chairperson for various committees of the World Health Organization.

Born in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Tupaz-Ramos graduated with a BS in Medicine, cum laude, from UP and moved her specialty early. Just three years after graduating from the Manila Medical College in 1966 and started her career with a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1967. A TOPNOTCH awardee in 1963, a PAST Outstanding Young Scientist awardee in 1969, and PCP-distinguished researcher in 1999. Then president of the Tropical Disease Foundation, she is also chair of the National Infectious Disease advisory committee to the Department of Health and chief of the National Infectious Disease Control Section of the Makati Medical Center.

Albacea and Tupaz-Ramos, together with plant breeder Dr. Reynaldo Villareal of Cornell University, were inducted into the NAST last week at the same gathering of the country's most prominent scientists. Congratulations!

Email the author at litocesar@yahoo.com

New antiobesity drug gets European Union approval

By Charles E. Bolton

A DRUG THAT COULD REVOLUtionize the treatment of obesity and diabetes was finally approved in the European Union, the first to do so after the drug's successful worldwide trials ended last year.

The European Commission has given the green light to market rimonabant (Acomplia), an anti-obesity drug that can be prescribed to overweight individuals who have other risk factors such as type 2 diabetes and dyslipidemia (high levels of triglycerides, low levels of HDL or "good" cholesterol, and too many LDL or "bad" cholesterol in the bloodstream).

"The approval of rimonabant (Acomplia) is an important development as this could be the start for other markets to approve a drug that could help millions of overweight and obese worldwide reduce their risk of having various medical conditions in the future," said Cheryl Arnold, spokesperson for Sanofi-Aventis' corporate communications manager.

Obesity and being overweight pose a major risk for chronic diseases including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and stroke, and certain forms of cancer.

Exploit

Rimonabant, discovered and developed by French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi-Aventis, works by exploiting a system in the brain and other parts of the body—the endocannabinoid—which is believed to regulate food intake and energy expenditure in the human body.

Discovered in 1994, the endocannabinoid system is comprised of cannabinoid receptors found all over the body; in the brain, they are found in the limbic brain as well as in the gastrointestinal tract and pancreas.

Rimonabant is the first in a new class of drugs called cannabinoid-1 (CB1) blockers, which specifically targets CB1 receptors found in the brain to affect appetite and ingestion of glucose and lipid (or fat) metabolism, including adipose tissue, the body's main storage organ for fat.

"The CB1 receptors play a role in multiple pathways that regulate body weight," explained Dr. Lee Yan Goal of the University Hospital Antwerp in Belgium during the recent international meeting. He named six cardiometabolic risks linked to these receptors.

18% less

In a series of trials involving more than 6,000 patients in the United States and Europe, around a quarter of those taking the drug lost more than 10 percent of their initial body weight after a year.

Results from these studies demonstrated that one 20-mg tablet taken every day experienced significant reductions of their waist circumference and body weight as well as improvements in multiple cardiometabolic risk factors, including cholesterol, triglycerides and an evidence of insulin resistance.

"Those with large waist circumferences (abdominal obesity) who also have dyslipidemia such as high triglycerides and low HDL cholesterol are most likely to gain the most from this drug. Almost half the adult population with a large waistline and dyslipidemia [defined as a Filipino as having over 90 cm/35.5 in. for male and 80 cm/31.5 in. for female] present with at least three additional risk factors, all contributing to an increased cardiometabolic risk," said the Goal.

According to the World Health Organization, there are currently more than 1 billion overweight adults worldwide with at least 300 million falling under the category of being obese.

"Until now we have not had a drug that addresses the multiple cardiometabolic risk factors that are present in each individual with obesity and type 2 diabetes," said Van Gaal.

He said the presence of rimonabant is an important step forward to treat the multiple risk factors which contribute to the global risk for diabetes and cardiovascular disease, offering added benefits beyond weight loss for individuals with risk factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes.

People, Events & Products

PHILIPPINE LEGION OF HONOR

Real estate investment lectures

Freebie Day at Bayview Park

For that monthly visitor

CORY QUIRINO'S SECRET TO YOUNG GLOWING SKIN

People, Events & Products

Editor Aries Espinosa

Oriental Garden Kiddie Fair

SUMMER MOVES MOUNTED IN T'TIC high-spirits and relaxing atmosphere events in Oriental Garden Makati- an executive condominium that offers a serene yet harmonious way of life in the heart of the country's financial district.

This is exactly what sharing the extensively-held Oriental Garden Kiddie Fair that delighted both the young and young at heart. Hosted by property developer Federal Land Inc., the theme-themed pavilions of the high-rise residences was transformed into a colorful arena of games, food, shows and more.

Families gathered to watch the puppets, storytellers, and an interactive bubble show. The educational animal show, which featured talented birds, unique reptiles and furry mammals, taught the children about the different species and on the responsibility every one has in taking care of them. Kids eagerly joined the different contests as with hula-hooping and while the parents eagerly awaited the results of the raffle draw. Brightly decorated food carts served free mouth-watering snacks like corn dogs, cheese fries, ice cream and tropical shakes- the perfect treats for a festive feast.

The fun-filled day proved to be the perfect start for the residents Oriental Garden as more and mingle with their neighbors. At the end of the day, both parents and children had easily made new friends. With strong community values, Oriental Garden Makati serves as the perfect home for urbanites seeking a nourishing setting to raise a family.

It consists of two structures — the Lime Tower and the Orchid Tower. Each provides the dreamy city abode for individuals and families who wish to lead a fast-paced life, but at the same time, desire a sanctuary of peace and tranquility they can come home to.

Surrounded by tropical flowers and lush greenery, Oriental Garden truly stands out in the Makati cityscape just

JOLLIBEE PARTNERS WITH AIM FOR THE ASIAN FORUM ON CSR

Jollibee Foods Corp. and the Ramon Del Rosario Sr.-led Center for Corporate Responsibility (RVCCR) in Manila on Sept. 29 to 30, as the Green Plaza Hotel and Shoe Foods Corp. chair and CEO Tony Tan Caktiong, Jollibee Foundation president Grace Tan Caktiong, and AIM-RVCCR Center director Felipe Miranda.

Sparkling Mega loves the Sparkling Wega

THE COUNTRY'S ONE AND ONLY Mega star, Sharon Cuneta, is the proud new endorser of the sparkling Wega, Sosyo's new line of affordable yet premium quality OST refreshers.

To tie with excitement that our timeless Sharon Cuneta, one of the most important multi-media stars in Philippine history, to be the endorser of our Sosyo Sparkling Wega," said Ishmi Kabayashi, Sosyo Philippines' president and managing director. "With a long and illustrious career in cinema, music, and television that continues to inspire and touch the hearts of the public, Cuneta is truly like no other."

The Sparkling Wega Series are powered by Sosyo's exclusive 9S Taurosyn and the newly-developed, patented Phytozest 9S200 technology. The 9S Phytozest technology utilizes High Tension Appetizer Unlit which produces exceptionally bright image with greater depth and quality. Moreover, the Auto Contrast Optimization to Intelligent Picture Plus which activates sudden wide range luminance images at increase its potential by 30 percent to boast brighter contrast ratio ensured to produce Wega models. This function optimizes the contrast of bright and dark scenes as well as improving picture quality by controlling sensitivity, color level, sharpness and brightness when receiving weak broadcasts or signals.

HIP-HOP! Redmond Chan, Sosyo Philippines' president and managing director L to stream shaking hands with Sharon Cuneta.

Finally, the Sosyo Sparkling Wega TVs are Real Flat TVs. While compact size CRT TVs have their own flat TVs, their screens are usually flat on the surface, but are actually curved inside. Only Sosyo delivers real flat screens, letting consumers experience natural picture quality like no other.

As part of their partnership, Sosyo Philippines would be sponsoring her upcoming provincial tour. These concerts would also give her audience a chance to witness grand displays of the Sosyo Sparkling Wega, as they can see first hand the superior picture color, sharpness, sensitivity, and brightness as can only be delivered by Sosyo.

PERV GROUNDBREAKING, LAUNCHING

Philippine Estates Corp. snapped the traditional groundbreaking ceremony of the Verdana Homes, the 19-hectare affordable residential condominium in Valenzuela City. Shown in photo are James B. Palmares, chief executive officer of Philippine Estates Corp., at the signing of their exclusive marketing agreement for the development of Verdana Homes. Also in photo are (from left), Bautista, Mayor Lim (project manager), Architect Marco and Roland Pineda (sales officers), and engineer Cornelio Cuevas Jr. The launching and groundbreaking ceremonies of Nine 19-storey affordable residential condominium project was held on July 7, at the project site in Brgy. Malinta, Valenzuela City.

VISIT GRILL 21 AT THE BIG APPLE

Adventurous adventure their tastes, but rarely fine tune to what they really want. Now, there's an answer to these expectations in Grill 21, located at the 34th East 21st St. in New York City, formed by Marissa Bautista, Grill 21 is the answer to variety. The restaurant boasts fresh menu, designed by their very own Chef Nino Tuazon, in a fusion of Asian, Continental and Italian dishes. Chef Nino, a Filipino, has a 10% interest in his career on the fast track since served at the executive dining room of the NBC studio, serving stars like Matt Lauer and Katie Couric of the Today Show. For starters, try Grill 21's Mozzarella Stick with Marinara Sauce, Crispy Calamari and Tuna Tartare. Then there's delightful entrées your palate with the crunchy texture of the cheese, generously dribbled with olive oil. Calling Filipino, the Company's owners with sweet mango-tango sauce, great barbecue of bacon. What's more, their polite and efficient staff will serve you with gusto that it's not a surprise that the restaurant is packed with its regular clientele. Filipinos or not. So if you are in the Big Apple, make sure to visit Grill 21 and savor the delicious offerings they have today!

Product FILES

Charmee All Flow With Wings

GET O-MIRACLE WITH CHARMEE ALL FLOW With Wings! Charmee All Flow feminine pad provides charming protection in individually wrapped packs. Its leak control channels allow fast absorption of flow to maintain dryness and discretion and holds the liquid inside the pad so it is turned into gel. How cool is that? Charmee goes all the way to make sure you are protected when you need it most. And, if providing utmost protection is not enough, its comfortable cotton cover provides a clean, fresh feeling anytime, anywhere. Try it now and feel the charming difference that only Charmee can provide! Available at leading supermarkets, sari-sari stores, market stalls and selected outlets nationwide.

Splash presents Hiyas Papaya Soap

SPLASH CONFIDENTLY RELAUNCHES its Hiyas Organics Orange Papaya Soap, which contains natural papaya, an ingredient that provides whitening benefits to the skin. This natural ingredient helps remove dead skin cells, promotes better skin whitening as a price its competitive list of women from ED socio-economic class, can really afford. However, offering value for money is just one of Hiyas Papaya Soap's powers. It also empowers consumers to feel good about themselves. Existing housewives, students and other budget-conscious females to be less guilty about pampering themselves without sacrificing their budget for other needs.

Parker serves a fresh menu of jotters

The British School Manila spends P150M to enhance facilities

BRITISH AMBASSADOR H.E. Peter Beckingham and Sir with Gillian Seckerhgton greet the British School's topping out ceremony of Classes B on May 23.

The construction of this large four-storey building, which is a major part of the school's plan to further develop facilities for students at its well-designed and extensive campus in Fort Bonifacio.

This additional state modern building will be fully equipped with state-of-the-art science laboratories and all teaching rooms and offices will be multi-media capable, including ceiling for interactive whiteboards. Like everything at the British School, the new building is designed for the highest levels of health and safety.

The 3rd level, above basement parking, will house an extensive music facility including a state of the-art recording studio, seven practice rooms and a large multi-purpose room to accommodate a full school orchestra. The whole area will be sound-proofed and acoustically engineered in a very high standard. The 2nd level will have suites for humanities and modern foreign languages. The 3rd level will have woodland facilities for students taking the International Baccalaureate course, including dedicated classroom areas, library and study areas. Also on this level there will be three English rooms and a drama room able to accommodate 200 people for productions.

British School students have been remarkably successful in the IB Diploma Programme, gaining admissions, leading to their placement to top universities in the US in the USA and in other overseas countries.

Their success are a reflection of the vision and mission of the British School Manila which is to provide the highest quality of education, to help each student reach his or her full potential, and to do so within a caring environment which recognizes individual needs.

The British School Manila delivers class size and total intake to ensure each student receives individual attention to benefit fully from the broad, balanced and challenging curriculum and from all the many other available activities designed to develop creativity and care and interests.

The British School Manila student body currently includes 19 different nationalities, and the school aims to be those who will become independent responsible, confident thinkers, decision makers, effective communicators, team players, and active participants in a global society.

CENTERPOINTE'S CD ALBUM LAUNCHED

The Center for Positions Philippines, Management Consultancy recently launched the CD Album of Star Centerpointe, one of the country's most promising kids' choral group, in various music institutes Manila. The Centerpointe's most recent performances was at Rockwell's Mall in Rockwell Drive City captured the musical hearts of an SRO crowd. Transcribe the Center for Pop Music Philippines Inc., the Centerpointe is composed of Miguel Raymundo, Jasmine Salvo, Carlyn Ocampo, Christopher Peng and Randall Pangalinan. Most of the songs in the album is written by Rodel Mauleon.

PVB, SAI PHILIPPINES CONTRACT SIGNING

SAI Philippines, the leader in business intelligence software and solutions, has announced the signing of Philippine Veterans Bank, another commercial bank servicing Filipino war veterans and their families, as its first customer for SAI Money Laundering Detection. Photo shows Secured executive Rosendo Bautista, president and CEO, Philippine Veterans Bank, and Arnold Mauleon, business development manager for the public sector, SAI Philippines.

STARKIDS DAYCARE AT MALL

Star Kids Daycare International now plans to expand its operations with the recent to open brands at the ground floor of Shoe Mall in the Shoemart (SM) Megamall Building. The Starkids Megamall will be the third branch after Starkids and Alabang Town Center. Shown during the contract signing are (from left) Ms. Teresa Garcia-Gaglioni, president of Accelerated Trading Co. Inc. and Ms. Pamela Tantoco-Lim, co-founder of SHE-Star Kids Daycare and established to provide a safe environment with activities to stimulate the interest of children from 3 to 12 years old. The daycare centers will also offer several services. For more details call 891-11-21.

CDO HOLDS ANNUAL MEDICAL MISSION

CDO Foodsphere has held recently a medical mission that benefited some 400 families in Mandaluyong. The activity, organized by United Laboratories Inc. is held yearly to reiterate the meat processing firm's social responsibility. Its hand-in-hand activities were company volunteers led by Marites Encomienda, Mandaluyong assistant vice president and assistant general manager.

'CARING BEYOND AIR'

In an effort to further assert our human service, Philippine Airlines Inc., the country's world-leading carrier and individual endeavors to variations, recently announced its Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) initiatives. Underlining the company's program is the official campaign slogan "Caring Beyond Air". More than recently, it is the welcome for customers as being the most important backbone of Philippine's success. Shown during the launch are (from left), Jessie F. Ping Jr., general manager; Mark Dimpas, service engineer (and grand winner of single-type contest); and John Villaruel, AIP medical fleet manager.

LPCI, JOYFUL GRACE ACADEMY SIGN AGREEMENT

Lopez Plans Consolidated Inc (LPCI) representing its senior vice president for strategic sales, Felix S. Alfonso III, signed up a special Small Size Precast Plant contract with Joyful Grace Academy (JGA) based in Calauag, Quezon this, Cavite, as extraordinary benefit of its teachers and employees. Behind Jose (R) is Delfino, Cecilia Gleason (from left) Abel Alan Co - LPCI sales and marketing director; Synthia Singlar - JGA teacher; Lolo Abigail Ilagan - JGA chief executive officer; Rhodora Ilagan - JGA owner and principal; Elsa Gumba - LPCI group business manager and Jose Sumbo Sr.

Revival of Surigao–Davao growth area pushed

Industry leaders expect zone to usher trade, tourism growth

By Jeffrey M. Tupas and Jaydee Hallare
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—LOCAL OFFICIALS AND business leaders have signified their interest to work together in reviving the Surigao–Davao Oriental Pacific Rim (Sudapacrim) growth corridor.

During the 7th Davao-Sumitomo Conference held in Mati, Davao Oriental last month, industry players said that the zone would become a gateway for trade, tourism and investments in Mindanao.

Virgilio Lavestidas, officer in charge of the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), said that key stakeholders in Sudapacrim should take advantage of its resources and its geographical location.

"It is high time to look further and maximize our strategic location in establishing direct trade and investment linkages with our foreign neighbors like Palau," Lavestidas said.

Established in 1997, the Sudapacrim growth corridor was designed to accelerate the growth of Surigao and the least developed Davao provinces.

With at least one city and 50 municipalities, the zone is noted for its natural and mineral resources, agriculture, marine and fishery, mining and tourism.

Despite its advantages, however, business in the corridor has barely grown over the years.

Records from the Board of Investments (BOI) showed that from 2000 to 2005, the corridor's investment shares was only P34.4 billion, representing just one project in Surigao del Norte.

"We are overcome by the realization of being isolated from the more advanced cities and provinces in the country by manifesting this corridor into a gateway for trade, tourism and investments from our partners in the bigger Asia Pacific Rim," Lavestidas said.

He said Palau alone, which has a population of 20,000, is looking for agricultural and industrial products.

"The present move to revitalize the Sudapacrim project is a highly welcome initiative that should be supported both by the public and private sectors," Lavestidas added.

At this developed, over 50 representatives from Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-the Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) would meet in Koronadal City, South Cotabato from July 19 to 21 for a high-level meeting that aims to promote greater tourism and cross-border traffic in the sub-region.

BAGA was created in March 1994 to spur socio-economic growth in some areas of the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia.

The growth polygon has a combined population of more than 50 million across 15 subjurisdictions of land area with great potential for tourism, natural resources, SMEs, transportation, infrastructure and information and communication technology development.

Teodoro Locsin Jr., undersecretary of Malaysia, Philippines-BIMP-EAGA Joint Tourism Development cluster delegation head, said the discussion would center on the status of the initiative to promote BIMP-EAGA as the "Tourism Destination" as well as improve air connectivity in the area.

Copra prices rising in Eastern Visayas

By Joey A. Gallardo
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MORE than one million coconut farmers in Eastern Visayas are enjoying one of their best seasons as copra prices in the region are on the upswing.

Joel Pilapil, the assistant regional manager of Philippine Coconut Authority in Region VIII, said recently that since the start of the year, copra prices in the region jumped once from P15 a kilo to a high of P20 a kilo with the average price placed at P17 a kilo.

Last year, prices were hovering at between P10 and P12 a kilo.

"Our coconut farmers are enjoying attractive prices of copra, which is good for them and to our economy," Pilapil told the reporters.

Pilapil said the high copra prices could be attributed to the strong demand for coconut oil in the world market.

Coconut oil is used as an ingredient in the manufacturing of soap, cosmetics and cooking oil.

Last year, Eastern Visayas, with an average copra production of 873,000 metric tons, contributed P49 million to the nation's economy with the export of copra primarily to Japan.

Other markets include Singapore, China, United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Vietnam.

The region has over 1.7 million residents who depend on coconut farming.

It is the third leading producer of copra in the country with over 649,000 hectares of land devoted to coconut farming.

Leyte has the highest production of copra among the six provinces in the region at over 390,000 metric tons a year, followed 600,000 coconut farmers are found in this province.

PCA points to 2004 as the best season for coconut farmers, as prices at that time ranged between P28.50 and P32.50 a kilo.

The worst was 2003 when copra prices dipped to as low as P6 a kilo.

Pilapil added that with the upcoming Clean-Grinding Basis Initiative Visayas, particularly in Leyte, coconut farmers could now guarantee income by selling the coconut shells to the oil milling plants.

"The new oil milling plants are accredited to fuel instead of the most expensive bunker fuel, he said.

"Instead of discarding the coconut shells or just use them for domestic consumption, the farmers can now sell these coconut shells to the oil milling plants," Pilapil said.

A kilo of coconut shell sells for P1.90, according to Pilapil.

He said the Leyte producers 9.6 billion coconuts, which are more than enough to meet the needs of the oil milling plants.

Oil milling plants that are set to start production are the Tacloban Oil Mills, located in Tolosa, Leyte with a production capacity of 90,000 metric tons a year; CBC Global, with a production capacity of 90,000 MT, and Visayas Oil Mills with a capacity of 60,000 MT, both located in Ormoc.

The Tacloban Oil Mill and the BCC Global are expected to operate within this year while the Visayas Oil Mills is expected to be operational next year.

Pilapil said that coconut crop, however, if the region's existing oil plant, the New Leyte Edible Oil in Tanauan, also in Leyte, would also resort to using coconut shell for fuel.

RICE CAKES Roasted rice cakes, locally known as bibingka, attract numerous passing through the Nabunturan town in Compostela Valley.

China market a boon for RP

By Delmar Carlos
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE EMERgence of China as a major economic power should not worry developing countries like the Philippines, according to an official of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Ambassador Lorenz, who recently completed the visit as the country's commercial attaché to Guangzhou, China, said the Philippines could position its products toward the Chinese market to ease the trade imbalance caused by China's growth in the past few years.

Lorenz, who graced the closing rites of Benguet State University's 90th founding anniversary cited the market potential of some of the country's products in China.

Lorenz said the Cordillera could export its organic vegetables, processed food products, honey, rice and minerals.

He also cited services in education, medical care and bioengineering as other possible services into China.

But Lorenz's position that China was more an opportunity than a threat drew flak from members of the academe who echoed the complaints of Cordillera farmers over the unabated entry into the country of Chinese vegetables, particularly carrots.

Dr. Gloria Lee, director of BSU's Institute of Public Administration, said there was no way China's 1.3 billion population could become a promising market for the region's vegetables since Chinese vegetables had already penetrated the domestic market.

Chinese vegetables, imported legally or smuggled, had deep-level local farmers of their market in Metro Manila, she said.

But Lorenz said Chinese vegetables should not be a detriment for local products if the latter would be produced following global standards.

Lorenz said it is not only in agriculture where the country could take advantage of China's decision to adopt an open market after its membership in the World Trade Organization in 2001.

He cited the experience of several Chinese-Filipino owned companies that are now reaping dividends in China.

Lorenz said part of the $2.5-$3 billion accumulated investments in China came from Philippine-based firms like Solid Industrial Enterprise Corp., San Miguel Corp., Allied Bank, Metrobank and SM City in Xiamen, China.

The Philippines, he said, could also become an alternative for foreign investors to raise their Chinese operations from abroad.

Lorenz said this was seen in the cases of Motorola, Nokia and Philips, which have put up branches both here and in China for testing and assembly of semiconductor chips.

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Basic meditation classes at Mandarin Oriental's yoga studio

ACHIEVE WELLNESS OF MIND, BODY, and spirit at Mandarin Oriental, Manila's Yoga Studio, with basic meditation classes beginning July 17.

The basic meditation classes can stabilize emotional changes and prevent abnormal functions of the body's vital organs. Basic meditation not only sustains the sense organs, but also controls the autonomous nervous system. The meditation course spans six one-hour sessions, at P3,000 per course. Two classes a day will be held from Monday to Saturday, at 7 a.m. to 8 a.m., and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Mandarin Oriental's Yoga exercises, **profile: the Patanjali Yoga Sutra philosophy** which forms the theoretical and philosophical base of the Raja Yoga discipline (considered the highest form of yoga), combined with Hatha-yoga(by) a branch of medicine often referred to as "Kingdom therapy" that is based mainly on the exercise practice of the application of the simple laws of natural. The eight components of yoga as based on Patanjali Yoga Sutras theory are: restraints, observances of mastery, physical postures, breathing exercises, restraining of sense organs, contemplation, meditation, and samadhi.

These steps are vital in the practice of yoga as they have potential in improving mental behavior, physical health, and circulation of oxygenated blood in the body, and **maximizing the sense organs and the mind** thereby, achieving tranquility and sensory. **Some of the advantages of practicing an** integrated type of yoga include the prevention of psychosomatic diseases, and the improvement of an individual's resistance and **ability to endure stressful situations.**

The hotel's Yoga studio located on the 18th floor is the country's very first yoga studio in a deluxe hotel which opened in 2002, complementing the hotel's fabulous Thai-inspired haven of tranquility. The Oriental Spa, Towels and yoga mats are provided in the Yoga studio, with a maximum of 14 students. Hair ties be admitted per class. **Special classes may also be arranged** for a minimum of six sessions for at least four to five students.

For reservations and enquiries on the **schedule of classes, call** 750-8888 extension 2300.

A taste of the Orient at Dusit Hotel

THE MONTH OF JULY 2006, Dusit Hotel Nikko brings you to a whole new level of dining experience as they offer you a "Taste of the Orient."

Take a journey at The Café and partake on scrumptious adventures **in the 'land of Asian and Western** cuisine this month of July. The Café is your favorite destination where you will do daily Oriental buffet offerings taking you to a gastronomic journey to dining nirvana with a taste of world-class delicacies at **extraordinary discounts afterwards.**

Banjarong Royal Thai Cuisine restaurant offers you Tao Thai. Banjarong's Chef Tao is name him a **la carte menu featuring authentic** Thai salad creations from July 30 to 31.

At Benkay restaurant, Japanese Cuisine, its seasoned chef, Yoshiaki Tanakama, creates for the month of July a succulent collection of appetizers, Japanese dishes to give you a taste of his homeland. Enjoy the Seafood Bar in July and choose from among a selection of chef Yoshiaki's very own delicacies ranging from sweet and seafood items. Each order is served with an appetizer, pickles, miso soup and dessert.

For a taste of authentic Vietnamese cuisine, Thien Duong Vietnamese Cuisine, the restaurant **presents Bun a la carte menu items** as inspired by the vibrant cities of Saigon and Hanoi.

A perfect Filipino offering and a favorite destination for the month of July, Fiesta Sea Miguel brings back its popular Fiesta Hot Pot. The Fiesta Hot Pot is good for a family of 3 to 4 persons that complements the Filipino tradition of a lucky family dining experience. It offers 2 kinds of broth that blends well with a variety of ingredients consisting of vegetables and choice of meat or seafood. The Seafood Hot Pot is priced at P750++ per order while the Meat Hot Pot is priced at P650++ per order.

Enjoy unlimited servings of fresh brewed beer from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. for only P300 nett per person and Dusit Hot Pots from Miguel pale or light beer is from unlimited, bottomless up!

Chocolate-vegan supreme in Jade by at the Lobby Lounge with delectable chocolate delights **starts for a mid-day break** amidst the chilly month of July is a bestthing of satisfying hot chocolate served with "Sinful-licious" bread on the side. Priced at only P120++ per person.

Oriental and drink specialized wine exhibit you have on the mouthwatering wine of the mighty lounge singer amidst the relaxing ambiance of the Lobby Lounge. Choose from an invigorating selection of red and white wines to exchange savory spirits and prep up your evening with fabulous friends. Delightful wine pairings with our White Buffet from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. for only P500++ per person.

Dusit Hotel Nikko is the perfect venue for you to experience the art of authentic Oriental dining, which your eyes you were meant to behold the hotel in your itinerary this month of July.

For dining reservations, call 867-3000.

Waterfront brings back Indulgence 2006

WITH THE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS OF Waterfront Hotels & Casinos' Indulgence program, the country's largest Filipino-owned Hotel chain is in the think of things for another round of irresistible offerings. "With the relaunch of Indulgence 2006, guests now have the chance to relive and enjoy delicious perks and generous discounts in any of the four Waterfront hotels & Casinos across the country," delivers WHC corporate sales and marketing director Joey Hechanova.

Celebrate 4 with 1

WHC's Indulgence program 2006 has an added perk: it now includes in its expanding roster of properties three newest acquisitions, the newly renovated and revamped Manila Pavilion Hotel. "Indulgence is a celebration of 4 hotels with 1 bundle," says Hechanova. Another added premium is a new feature for 2006: Instead of the 3+1 promo in previous years, this years' Indulgence will feature value for money and a straight up rate of just P10,000 each. Each booklet enables the bearer to four room-night room accommodations in any of the following hotel properties of their choice: Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino and Waterfront Airport Hotel & Casino Mactan, both located in Cebu City; Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao and Manila Pavilion Hotel. Each booklet also includes one additional voucher that entitles guests to a **dditions complimentary buffet for one person** for every 4 paying guests in Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino's (WHC) Waterfront Airport Hotel & Casino Mactan's (WAC) and in Manila Pavilion Hotel's newly re-opened Seasons.

A concourse of indulgences

Added value, convenience and affordability comes in the form of one pre-paid booklet containing 5 overnight privilege vouchers, and as if that weren't enough, each hotel property throws in additional privileges inscribed in their coupon. Privileges such as complimentary access to Gilligan, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino's newly-renovated Fusion Center, or a 50 percent discount on drinks at Seahorse, Manila Pavilion's chic lounge in the hotel lobby, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., plus a standard 10 percent off on all Insular-owned restaurants, and so much more!

Indulgence 2006 bundles are limited in supply and its vouchers are valid up to Dec. 31. For inquiries and reservations, one may call the Waterfront Hotels & Casinos Manila Sales and Reservations Office at (02)687-0688, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel & Casino at (032)233-6888, Waterfront Airport Hotel, Casino Mactan at (032)340-6888, Manila Pavilion Hotel at (02)318-3232 and Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao at (082)333-2881. Interested parties may avail of Indulgence 2006 bundles at the Front Offices and Reservations Centers of the four Waterfront Hotels & Casinos, Manila Sales and Reservations Offices and Accredited Travel Agencies.

People, Events & Products

2nd Ambassador's Tour

ITS 6th EMPRESS DISTRICT CHAPTER OF COOPERATORS, Cadre Governor Ayong Maliksi and officials of his administration will officially host members of Delaware, New Jersey and Philadelphia delegation for the 2nd Ambassador and Consul General Tour in Cavite, Cavite, known also as the cultural center of the Philippines on July 15. Governor Maliksi will be accompanied by his various Mayors and members of the Provincial Society garnered in their 17th century Barong Tano at Saya and will welcome the delegates to the historic province of Aguinaldo's Kawit. The Pugay ceremony courtesy will be led by members of the Bautista Agoncillo family including Prime Minister Cesar Virata, whose forefathers personally designed the flag used to symbolize which is said to be Hong Kong. A welcome tea, press conference and welcome lunch at the Island Cove Family resort will follow before entering the Presidential dinner and dance will be held at the estate of famed landowner and philanthropist Nida Puyat. **Madrina Mayor Marsien Fernando will also entertain** the group with a tour of her show cottage industry on July 16. On July 17, Bishop Reynaldo Evangelista of the Golden Sunset Resort and Manila Bay Beauty Institute will host a lunch, tam and had spa. An entrepreneurs Business Matching Conference will be held by 18 to select president of PEMBOOR, on July 19.

EXTRA JOY! 2ND RAFFLE DRAW

Extra Joy, recently held the 2nd regional raffle draw at SM Center of Extra Joy Extra La Casa Fair 2nd Floor, Extra Joy Grand Mall, Extra Joy gave away P50,000 for the winner, P20,000 for the first prize and P10,000 for the 2nd prize. Similar draws were held at CDI City Mall, Dagupan, 3 Well Cubao City and SM City Cagayan De Oro, Gaisano Grand Mall of Mandaue, Elite Cubao and Cebu. Governor Gargan of Mandaue and Miraluna Lastimosa of Dagupan de Oro each won P50,000 as the first prize winners of the draws. Dagupan, Cebu and Cagayan de Oro raffle draws recipe Both. The new winning activities will still **have a chance to win P** Rafael Jr. and Ma. Luisa Ong. Photo shows (from left) Francis Magpantay, Fundraising Secretary Gaspan, area manager of PT Banking Section Fonte Asbestos and Joel Mantic, SRAD representative announcing the 1st prize winner (SRM).

Real Bank Celebrates Anniv with Alkansya '06

THE REAL BANK HEADED A MEMORABLE celebration of its banking career as it celebrates its 20th Anniversary tagged as Alkansya 2006 — Ang Lalagyan Kapalaran Ay Nakasalalay Sa Yo, many joint opportunities for and opportunities for the year simple to the Bank's savings advocacy project with the Department of Education called "Bida Bata ... Ang mayor at Negosyo" which is now has already won three major awards that includes Anniversary Kontra Bida 2006 Advertising Awards, the National Consumers' Quality Awards of 2006 for Family and Community Advocacy and the 2006 Global Excellence Award for their Family and community Advocacy.

ING raises RP bond rating

By Michelle V. Ramos

LONDON-BASED INVESTMENT BANK ING has raised its assessment of Philippine dollar-denominated bonds from "neutral" to "overweight," indicating the confidence of the government's commitment to achieve its deficit-reduction goals as seen by the investing.

An "overweight" assessment is a recommendation for clients to buy the bonds, while "neutral" is suggested to hold or dispose.

"We view the consistent commitment to balancing the budget by 2008 solid," ING said in a report.

The bank noted the government's move to reject proposals to raise the deficit target for 2007 and affirm the attainment of a zero budget deficit, citing this showed political will to improve the country's fiscal environment.

ING opined this keeping on track of the fiscal program would likely help the Philippines finally catch up shares and in rating upgrade.

The decision of ING to increase its assessment of Philippine bonds followed the pronouncement from the Department of Finance that the government would stick to its fiscal program. The program states that the deficit would be reduced from 2.2 percent to 0.25 percent by 2008.

Investors said the government could still accommodate the need to improve infrastructure spending without abandoning the deficit-reduction goals.

The government has been urged to make its deficit-reduction program less aggressive to give due focus on the need for infrastructure development. Poor level of infrastructure has been blamed partly for the country's poor performance in attracting foreign investments.

"We concur with the consensus that recently enacted fiscal and tax reforms in the 2007 fiscal deficit target could seriously drag investor confidence," ING said.

"The demonstration of political will by the administration to stay committed to fiscal reforms over the last two years [of ongoing tedious deficit cutting]. The President, through her economic team, has implemented scheduling fiscal program that has produced significant fiscal consolidation," ING had last said.

Last year, the government posted a deficit of only P146.8 billion, or 21.5 percent lower than the target of P187 billion.

Disclosures

ARRAN V. Ramirez, Dominic L. Ramirez, S.L. Ardosa and Ed. Francisco U. Ortiga, Francisco F. Ortiga Jr., Hubert Y. Ortiga, Manuel H. De Jesus and Jaime Ysmael Ramos, II. Tangco have been elected directors of A.L. Peter Holdings Corp. on July 13. Previously, Ortiga and Ramos Y. Ortiga, as the other hand, were named independent directors.

GSIS/SSS BS Financial Network Inc. will hold its annual stockholders meeting on Sept. 5, 2 p.m. at Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 8 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

PSEi Joseph M. Pabale has tendered his resignation as executive of the Philippine Stock Exchange, effective July 31. Pabale joined [illegible] PSE Group of

Stocks plunge . . .

From page B8

Investor sentiment was likely to remain cautious this week. "We are just going to follow regional trends in the markets."

Among other active stocks, Ayala Corp. fell 4.5 percent to P503.50, Bank of the Philippine Islands lost 2.9 percent to P49.50, Globe Telecom gave up 2.1 percent to P950, and International Container Terminal shed 3.2 percent to P127.9.

All subindexes witnessed, while the Services led losers (2 to 17, with 10 stocks unchanged.

A host of positive domestic economic data counterbalanced a lackluster investor focused on corporate concerns, Embista said.

"Most of the data were already known to the bourse. What's happening now is we have all these countries dumping whatever positive news and data," she said.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported that OFW remittances rose 15 percent to $2bn in more than $1 billion on increased deployment of Filipino workers.

The monetary authority also disclosed that consumer and household loan rates as of the end of May fell to 7.26 percent from the previous month's 8.08 percent, as the sector continued to deepen of prospect-boosting banks' ability in raising funds at rates.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves also announced that the government was sticking to its fiscal reform program, amid reports of efforts by some public officials to make changes to accommodate increased government spending.

With a report from AFP

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Firewalls, opportunity for creativity

CITY LIVING THESE DAYS IS LESS living in a concrete jungle. Let cars remain. Despite try to maximize in usage for building up to the limits of accepted building codes and local ordinances.

In some areas, houses stand cheek by jowl with small business establishments, warehouses or factories which high rise condominiums. In cases like these, builders resort to constructing firewalls capacity to lower the risk of fire spreading rapidly between buildings and, secondary, to create a visual separation and muffle noises and fumes from the neighboring property.

Firewalls, those flat concrete fences that rise as high as the homeowner does, are a double-edged blade that can give a semblance of privacy and security while simultaneously increasing the density of our concrete jungle.

'See-through' fences

MISONO Bajada Intramuros is pioneering "see-through" fences to reduce the encroaching effect of walls on outside and graffiti artists and to showcase the greenery that lies beyond them. It is a perfectly good concept and I hope he succeeds in getting the cooperation of property owners.

Meanwhile the golf course of Camp Aguinaldo if it were visible from Edsa, blocks out its fortifications, or the manicured expanse of Wackwack if it could be seen from Ortigas. The fears for trespassers' eyes could alleviate a lot of real tape, don't you think?

Sadly, however, we are stuck with these blank walls and must learn to live with them. The reality of these fractions in city areas is quite literally an "in concrete." However, that doesn't mean we can't improve what we already have. There are good ideas in these episodes: blockades and, with just a little imagination, the good side could be on your side.

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcelo de Guzman Jr.

Security, privacy

Privacy are inside high for security. Ironically, studies show that homes with high walls are less guarded more often than those with low fences. The reason, from the criminal's point of view, is that a solid wall provides criminals from "seeing the joint" or observing how to get many your valuables. Also, enclosure (but walls) deters witnesses to a crime and thus prevent homeowners themselves from seeing, who or when a crime is "being done" be. I think, having walls (or not) and its being a deterrent is a crime (or not) depend entirely on the owner's psyche.

Privacy is another key reason for the construction of those towering borders, especially when you have a swimming pool or a nice garden that you want to linger around. A simple alternative to a wall is to plant hedges, which are more visually appealing and environment-friendly to boot. Also, it can shield you more pleasantly from their scrutiny than bare walls but still leave which plants are best for your requirements.

Fire is the main concern for the prohibition of these gigantic walls, which in the manner they were called firewalls. The logical rulings regarding their construction are understood in the building and fire codes. Particularly for communities with a mix of establishments, this invention is a godsend and must be commended. However, firewalls are likewise found between neighboring homes such can be quite close together.

Somewhat if you live next to these towering walls? Are you the claustrophobic type? Are these boundaries blocking your view? Are getting any wind? Do you feel the ballistics neighbors, environment? You can make it work to your advantage, despite the limitations, legal aspects, and ownership.

PROJECTION walls do not always need to be solid. Here the front fence was created with louvered panels to allow ventilation and visibility for the residence from the inside.

PEDESTRIAN gate was removed in the area line of the house for just incision from ruin and to also create an entrance court.

Suggestions

Here are some frequent questions I've received about firewalls, along with my responses:

Can I build on top of my neighbor's existing wall? If it is a shared wall, yes. If not, ask your neighbor's permission. Build only if he agrees to the idea and if the original wall is structurally sound.

Can I drive a nail on the side of my neighbor's wall hang my property? No, but you can build something adjacent to it or attach your own wall to your fence's support.

It is surprising to note that the answers to these questions pertaining to property walls and its ownership are found not in the National Building Code but in the Civil Code of the Philippines. It is an enlightening read, especially if you have problems about your neighbors in terms of privacy noise, nuisance, etc.).

Opportunities

Now for the opportunities found in firewalls.

If there is no view, create one. There are many innovative architects and landscape architects who can create wall-scapes, spaces with water features and stylized screens that are soothing to the senses—appealing to the sight, relaxing to the ears, and cool even to touch.

A simple means: tile design on the wall adds color and style to something originally dull. With the proper landscaping and addition of pots, planters, hard copies, or plain hanging strips, you can achieve the pleasing cramped effect that many developers are now promoting. To lessen the massive impact and feeling of coldness, it can be planted with ivy, or covered with natural stones, bricks, bamboo, balsawan, or reeds. It can serve as a showcase of your collection of artworks and accessories from interior stained glass to wall hangings. With proper lighting, you could get a dramatic effect.

It is also a good place to express and display art, using the wall as a huge canvas. Be bold, however. It as a challenge for creative minds and home owners that can easily be realized out as often as their creativity dictates.

If you enjoy outdoor dining, a bare wall can be a perfect backdrop to perfect a barbecue pit. And make sure it's high enough to cover most of the smoke and soot from your roast.

Sometimes, we use it as a projection screen to show family videos during outdoor parties. Or, you can project televised games and contests for a big group to enjoy.

Firewalls beside large buildings are lucrative opportunities for advertisers, particularly as it is a property in a high-traffic area. Within the place of factory premises, the inside wall can be painted over with company logos and slogans.

Firewalls can be God's a bane and a boon, depending on how one wants to view it. With the right attention touch, this ubiquitous monstrosity of city living can transform into a wall of pride.

A taste of Carribean life at Palm Grove Condos

PALM trees and pockets of pavilion accentuate Palm Grove Condominium.

AT MLH DIVM CORDOMINIUMS IN Better Living, Paranaque City homeowners find a semblance of the Caribbean summer all-year-round.

The real thing—a paradise by the sea where the rich, the famous and the beautiful relax, party and need to be seen—may be out of reach for most of us. Unless extensively developed by SMC Homes only minutes away from Manila, one can still up a bit of the Caribbean life anytime. At Palm Grove, a modest might as well feel like the other seven thousand islands in her dream of a lifetime tourist getaway as she sips a cold glass of pina colada by the pool while her senses feast on lush vistas of palm trees and fresh garden sprawls all around her. If she needs further pampering, the housing enclave has a rich trove of other luxurious, resort-type facilities and amenities at her disposal.

Vacation feeling

Each unit at Palm Grove allows a resident to be part at ease with it's dazzling, ever-compelling resort Palm Grove's Phase 1 has been sold out immediately after its turnover and why the development's second phase is also being fast-become. The condo units have been laid out in such a way that they are open to a wide range of design and decorative styles their occupants may be as versatile desire.

Underscoring that coming home to a relaxed and comfortable environment is what everyone wants for, SMC's Homes' interior designer Heather Angeles explained why she has transformed the Caribbean ambiance inside the developments. "Palm Grove is very relaxed and sunny in the sense that there are a lot of gardens and flowers around which easily translate to a sense of lightness and a feeling that vacation on many of our residences," she says. "Plus, tend to convey that vacation feeling by showing our residents that they can actually bring the outdoors inside their homes."

Palms here and there

Interior says plants make for great design accents because they are very relaxing to the eye. "A good choice for indoor plants are palms for the simple reason that they are easy to maintain," she advises. The King Sago palms, the bamboo palms and the Majestic fishtail palms are the most popular types and they are very easy to find.

The bamboo palm, for instance, can be placed in the living area to add warmth and color to the space. "Palms are easy to maintain and don't require much. They're very decorative yet does not require much care and attention. They easily blend with any furniture or accent piece. Regardless of the color theme of your furniture, any variety of plants will never be a worry because they stand on their own and won't really be a distraction," Bendijo to the studied in recent years open and busy cities, a homeowner will find palms a perfectly fitting accessory in his abode.

Ideally situated in area of the fast-growing cities south of Manila, Palm Grove Condominiums is within easy access of the country's premier schools, commercial centers and the financial district of Makati.

The bamboo palm, for instance, can be placed in the living area to add warmth and color to the space. "Palms are easy to maintain and don't require much. They're very decorative yet does not require much care and attention. They easily blend with any furniture or accent piece. Regardless of the color theme of your furniture, any variety of plants will never be a worry because they stand on their own and won't really be a distraction," Bendijo to the studied in recent years open and busy cities, a homeowner will find palms a perfectly fitting accessory in his abode.

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Credibility in pest management a big investment

HAVING A WIDE KNOWLEDGE OF INSECT biology and elimination techniques is paramount in the Philippines, where we are surrounded by many organisms, some are even considered as pests. Dr. Pedro Gamba, who was appointed by the Philippine Department of Health (DOH) as consultant on pest management in 1993, has been in the business for more than 30 years. He is the president of Dr. Pedro's Pest Management Inc., a company that has been providing pest management services to residential and commercial establishments since 1975.

Gamba has had considerable experience with an assortment of residential and business structure pests, whether with property he's gotten through the years, or his client's. One of the unique assignments in his active participation in eliminating malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

Says Gamba: "I was selected to be the consultant to manage the malaria problem at Aguinaldo area in Subic. I contacted the problem in less than six months. When they got me, almost 10 percent of the people in the place were already infected with the disease. Two months after I started my disease-carrying mosquitoes management plan, infection was greatly reduced to only 2 percent, and it was totally contained after a few months."

According to Gamba, the traditional way to control was used biological means, through the release of small fish (Gambusia affinis) that eats mosquito larvae. The flow of water was diverted based on my management plan, so that the mosquitoes would be left to dry up. "I also used chemical control, and even when a resort heads to promote awareness about the disease," he added.

Favorable receptors

This commitment in giving lasting solutions has always been central to Dr. Pedro's, according to the entomologist, who has been open to using current technology and advancements in pest management. The company has been installing Intercept Termite Caulking Elimination System. It is the best getting continuous insecticide exception from termites, and Gamba is sure that the decision to apply as an outbound operator for Eastsides, Barangay Fiesta in the province to be a success.

"Some time back, I was informed that Dow agrosciences through their distributor Alcaj and Dr. was looking for a Dominion operator. Based on my profile and experience, I was considered for the job. There was extensive training and briefing, and Dr. Pedro's passed. I have five qualified technicians involved in operation. The program with clients is really good. At first, I was skeptical, even when I've been introduced to, and briefed about Sentricon because it means changing principles of termite control. But after we did a trial, it was very successful! I was really encouraged to use it after that."

NAP Gamba's pest control company Dr. Pedro's uses the Sentricon Colony Elimination System.

Some of those that were treated with Sentricon are the Cosmopolitan Center of Olongapo, the Olongapo Museum, the discontinued Pacific Garden Riviera Hotel and the San Agustin Church of Tiaong, Quezon, a Japanese firm, and residential properties in QMA. He adds that he has had encounters with termites for the past 20 years prior to his use of Sentricon, and has gotten used to the observation that the tiny creatures are capable of.

Quick results

"One of the things about Sentricon is its same colony-elimination system that I have observed a lot of times. Termites are social animals. And the damage immediately stop whenever termites feed on the bait—but even worker termites don't die. I've had instances because of that. I felt embarrassed when customers told me about continuing infestations. Establishing a big investment. With Sentricon, you have very dramatic results, as the clients are very satisfied."

Dr. Pedro's, aside from completing numerous assignments in Olongapo, Pampanga, Zambales and Bataan, is always open and willing to continue deepening in other avenues using new and improved methods to get rid of invasive insects and other bugs. "The first thing that I look for is the satisfaction of the customer," he offers. "Their peace of mind is very important and very rewarding for me. In the traditional method, when the termites attack again, it's hard to conduct business with the clients again because of the dissatisfaction. It's understandable; they should get their money's worth. Sentricon is the best and most rewarding solution, and I feel much better that it's able to help preserve their homes and establishments."

CrownAsia's masterplanned hometowns in the south

CROWNASIA, THE COUNTRY'S biggest builder of homes, invests in viable locations in the fast-developing Southern Luzon for its next batch of residential communities—Cita Nidia in Imus, Cavite and Sorrenta in Calamba, Laguna. Both communities belong to the company's Provident Communities, a roster of defined communities which homeowners can take pride in for generations to come.

As with each project of Crownasia, the Provident communities are strategically positioned for comfortable living while addressing the lifestyle needs of residents. Acquiring a property from CrownAsia's Provident Communities is an investment which will increase in value in the years ahead due to future business activities. Crownasia is an investment which will increase in value in the years ahead due to future business activities. Crownasia industrial complexes, neighborhood centers and other developments will most likely be in the vicinity of housing for work and leisure home, and placing homes almost two within each community.

Essential factor

Choosing prime area is fourth factor is of essential factor for the best property and continuous appreciation of the communities to accommodate more and more families who've chosen Crownasia as their home of choice.

Calabarzon is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Laguna with its growing number industrial parks and commercial establishments in the area. As the first major one planned, Indian-inspired community in Calamba, features his become a thriving residential region, drawing such resident to a Cita Nidia in Imus, Cavite and Sorrenta in Calamba, Laguna.

Both communities each Cita Nidia offer the first-class homes, a line of model homes inspired by distinct Indian architecture while boasting of signature luxury which make Crownasia living apart—Jade, Pearl, Sapphire, Emerald and Ruby.

Other enclaves

Other Crownasia CrownAsia enclaves in Mindanao is the Provident Communities Davao on Mindforty and Mala Alta in Sampaloc City; Santa Cruz Daang Hari, Alabang Batangas; Cavite; and Imus, Cavite and soon-all in former Sta. Cavite.

Creating idyllic urban enclaves across as the premier aspirations of CrownAsia while industrial expansion and residential developments opportunities are prioritized. Visit any of the hometowns and discover what possibly defines CrownAsia's unrivaled success to fulfill the life-long dreams of Filipino families.

Flower garden community to rise in Tagaytay City

from page B12

lot Tagaytay has many sprawling flower farms. They inspired us to give Bloomfields Tagaytay a similar surroundings. Besides, flower gardens and well-planted homes not only improve air quality and create environment hospitable to plants and animal species but also foster the development of a community identity and spirit," Alfonso explains.

Alfonso added that flower garden spaces also allow for interaction with nature and the productive use of land.

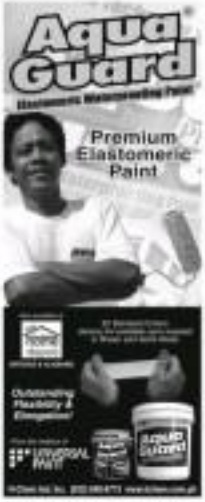
Mix-use development

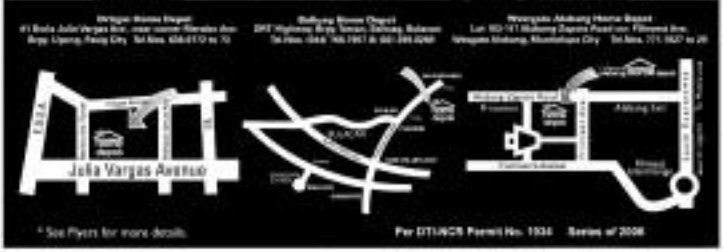
After the 4.4-hectare residential component of Bloomfields Tagaytay is finished, another 2.1 hectare property located in front of the property facing the highway will give rise to a mix-use development composed of an outdoor entertainment, a mid-rise hotel and commercial/business center.

But while the plan for this phase is still being finalized, Alfonso assures that by end of December 2007, Bloomfields Tagaytay residents will be able to enjoy the development together with the amenities that will be completed including a recreational center, activity center and swimming pool.

Moreover, Alfonso says that because of the development's strategic location, Bloomfields Tagaytay residents would not have any problem reaching the city's cool vibe. Tagay's top dining destinations and tourist spots. Moreover, the numerous beaches lining up Batangas and Cavite seasons are just a few hours's drive away," Alfonso says.

HOPE design inspired by American country homes soon here in the Andaluisa model home will soon adorn the 10-hectare development in Tagaytay.





Edna Cesar O. Mangawang

PROPERTY

WITH A TOTAL floor area of 133 sq m, the two-storey, three-bedroom Anthurium model home is the most spacious

Flower garden community to rise in Tagaytay City

By Charles E. Rollon

FOR DECADES, Tagaytay has been successfully attracting home developers to put their next projects in this famous city known for its year-round cool climate, laid back atmosphere and proximity to Metro Manila.

One of these upcoming projects is Bloomfields Tagaytay, a private enclave that will soon rise along Tagaytay-Nasugbu highway (in front of Josephine's Restaurant).

"Bloomfields Tagaytay will be Robinsons Homes Inc.'s most exclusive residential community project to date. Expect the homes here to be spacious and well-appointed, amenities-wise, and of course, conveniently located, so say the proponents from Tagaytay City to Ametro Inc." describes Madrie Alfonso, ROE-DAV and general manager.

The RBI (http://robinsonsland.com) is the housing subsidiary of Robinsons Land Corp., a real estate giant known for its industrial plants, malls and condominiums.

Only 186 lots available

Because of its exclusivity, Alfonso says Bloomfields Tagaytay is only offering 186 lots (at P11,800/sq m) for housing lot sizes from 240 sq m and up.

"However, should our homebuyers choose for a house and lot package, we also have three two-story house models designed around the luxurious country house 10s, 30s, division and Cal Deyo (199 sq m)," Alfonso adds.

The 106-sq-m 3-bdrm floor area's home model carries a price tag of Ph.39 million while the 210-sq-m 4-bedroom with at Ph.04 million.

According to Alfonso, the whole community will carry an overall theme inspired by the American Revere Bella Ideas, the names of the house models so that every available space in the development will be devoted to flower gardens.

"Our many people may know it

FLOWER, B15

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style | urban living | pop culture | entertainment | recreation

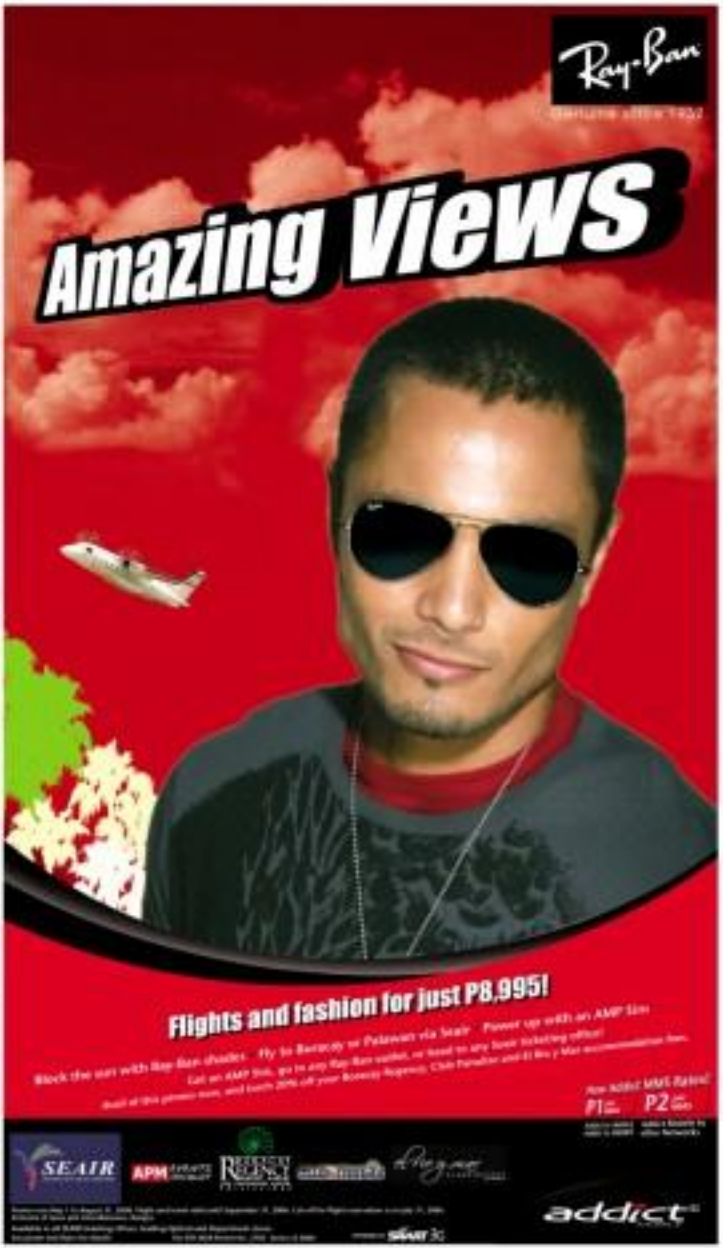
Super! and Astring-O-sol Ice take you to the **Extreme** with the 2006 'I am Super Awards' page 01

Super! Exclusive interview with Pinoy fashion wunderkind **Lesley Mobo** page C2

Only in Super! exclusives with Johnny Depp, Keira Knightley and Orlando Bloom page 01

Open letter to the **Fab Five** page 01

Are **Pinoys** really rude? page 03



Hello Mob

By Tim Yap

THIS IS THE MOMENT FOR the global Filipino. One such Pinoy who is wanting our rolen-oh-so-proudly is Lesley Meiko, a young designer making us Super! proud in the fashion capital of London. Slowly and surely, he is rising up the ladder of success in the land of the Queen.

Super! had the rare pleasure of hanging out with Lesley recently and we found him in Manila to launch the launch of Shoebar HIP! Just before the event proper, Lesley and I had our heads at the lobby lounge of the Makati Shangri-La and shared fashion notes with each other.

Most everyone thinks that people in fashion are all show-biz. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that Lesley approaches his creations in a very intellectual manner. He leans towards a more directional approach and predicts the return of minimalism after all the hoos of color that has pervaded today's fashion.

Here is a plentiful of our Super! style-ifications.

What are you working on right now?

At the moment I'm working with somebody on her label. It's really growing right now—it's called Jasmine Di Milo. It has really embraced the young girl market who like to dress up. About two years, it's already exclusive in Harrods. The adventure's very strong market in the Middle East. We're also selling in Los Angeles and New York, just to name a few. It's growing really well.

When you design, do you ever think 'hey I wanna do this but it won't sell, so I'll scrap it for now'?

That is a question that you should always throw back to young designers. Having my formal training of 5 years in Central St. Martins, you know it's about full creativity. But now that I work in a retail environment, you also have to adjust to your market. We work in a very structured way—we work with a commercial structure and then a creative structure, at least that's how I do it. You should do commercial planning first and from that point, you do creative planning. That's how we always work. I instead it during my stay in Harrods. In the retail environment, you always have to work with both corporate and professional. I infused it with my training in St. Martins. I think it's a perfect match. I managed to inject that ability and experience to this (women) Di Milo label.

You guys' towards more commercial or more creative?

You should have a balance of those two. You need a commercial if you want to be a long-term business, you have to be clear about the ethos and the philosophy that you stand for. You were it to grow and to expand—you want people to embrace it. I think you have to do your time before you develop profit. Because otherwise you will never survive this industry. The homestyle is creativity but it has to be structured commercially.

How about really international fashion shows?

You do fashion shows to attract buyers. It's a marketing event and for sales purposes. But, you show them your creativity but the intention is to show your direction, to sell.

Have about avant garde designers, Kaliyoco McQueen, Viktor and Rolf, et. al. **where they create spectacles and not necessarily wearable pieces—how does it add to their saleability?**

At the end this these ways the show tactics. **But now I think we are going back to being minimalists.** Fashion is very important to each a way that it's a reflection of what's happening in society, politically, economy wise and

LESLEY Meiko's design for the Jasmine Di Milo collection, available at Harrod's

'Filipino Unrealism'

How a once hopeless 'batugan' queen had lately turned into an insomniac, in the pursuit of encouraging dreaming in real

TO SLEEP: PERCHANCE to dream, as that bard William once penned. It was my very simple (and admittedly pretentious) way of defending my extraordinary ability to outdo most people in one of the greatest pleasures of man—sleeping.

For once upon a time, and for a long long time in fact, I ruled in "Queen Batugan" in my home. Indeed, if sleeping was an Olympic sport, then I was the unchallenged gold medalist. I had a reputation among friends and family for being able to sleep for sixteen hours straight. My most dreaded enemy: bed bugs. The Evil shares Clock. Not in spite of its noble duty to pull me out of the dream realm in order to transport me back into the real world of traffic, work, unpaid credit card bills, mean taxi

drivers and Erik Aquino. I wonder if that dream shorts deck as a formidable adversary. The more dreaded noise would be that grating ring that was stuffed the end of a seemingly eternal, hamatic journey, tinting the snooze button was simply an impossibility, as I would actually hurt it against the wall, hoping that within that wooden lid twilight between slumber and wakefulness, I would manage to stay a little longer in that limitless universe of the subconscious. Just to be allowed to enjoy my dreams, even for two minutes more.

For in that crazy surreal world, I strangely felt like I belonged there. In that galaxy of the imagination, there inhabited the figments of my subconscious that knew no boundaries of time, space, or logic. Where to begin? I would dream of flying over cities where fish grew instead of fruit, of meeting black-clad servicemen standing behind a purple canopy of stars, of luminous spheres guiding me through a land of gumdrops. In that Otherworld, I could have Tapa King with the Salmon one minute, then be whisked off to visit old hotel conversations with both Buddha and Jesus in Machu Picchu, and then lie on a beautiful beach with angels on my side. Oh, and ... um, there'd be romantic dates with both Gael Garcia Bernal and Johnny Depp, but I have imagined after that disaster in a well-kept secret between ourselves.

A Visa for one

Thus, those strange, wonderful, stupid, silly, absurd and magical ve. pantos of the incomprehensible subconscious mind would become normal topics among close friends the morning after. These words would be each partner's personal zip code of the mind, and I'd be enchanted listening about those travel voyages to incredible worlds that only offered a visa for one. Whether they were sweet dreams or terrifying nightmares, it was always a pleasure to hear about those refreshing escapes and fantastical encounters. And in those moments, reality would just be a tad more fascinating, even for but a fleeting moment.

I guess I was just allergic to ordinary things in ordinary worlds, and Real dreams became the one thing I looked forward to every night.

The Dream King

And that is why when I was first introduced to the worlds penned in pages of "The Sandman," I was immediately enraptured. I've been very taken of that dream world that I had longed to live in for so long. It was here that I was first introduced to The Dream King, as Morpheus, the elusive, melancholic entity that ruled the Kingdom where I had rummaged with delight.

There it came to pass, one year ago, that a crazy dream of mine actually came true, for the creator of "The Sandman," Neil Gaiman, had come to Manila for the first time. Suddenly, that "ordinary world" had already turned upside-down.

Well: Filipino fans all know that he was overwhelmed, shocked, and even glad to have been screamed and shouted on upon his arrival. It even got him to think that it was all "a big mistake" and that maybe the three-thousand-strong rabble of Pinoy fans had mistook him for a famous rock star.

Because of the immensely successful booksigning, Neil Gaiman made a promise to give something, a "surprise" back to the Filipino people. This of course, was eventually to

realized to be the Graphic Fiction Au- friend: a roleplaying an annual writing i desire in order to m age Filipino literat The direction was a what he turned o him." In his own "There is a strange realism in literatu manage Filipino-ye

So I may as well have had this pl kind the scenes h that not only enc quaint instances o of dreams, but ra imagination of the did make sense, m brand of magical r hours of pre-colon thereafter as an Lord, saloon, dwelle cross was first set o

o!

Super! sits down for an exclusive chat with Pinoy fashion wunderkind, Lesley Mobo

Lesley Mobo bio

On February 19th, 2006, Filipino designer Lesley Mobo made his standing debut at London Fashion Week. Together with eight models and a stylist, Mobo is a new graduate of Central Saint Martins. The fashion design talent has a slot at the coveted London Fashion Week to show off his latest graduation, and it was here that he made his debut. His work consists of a combination of Filipino imagination and British indulgence. Elegance and originality to reminiscent royal museums. Both elements weave together in a dazzling display of craftsmanship and art on the catwalk. Currently, he is designing for esteemed music legends Bjork and a host of designs for Harrods concept label, Journey St Nitin. And if that wasn't enough, he is also the latest prince of the FTI ballad, the pristine young designers' competition of the moment. A simple blend of fashion and celebrities, Lesley takes classic men's underwear and adds a outfit "WTF through the complex composition that one hadn't take his place. ABSOLUT he stitched under the waistband for good measure. "I think that it's clothing, and for this case men's underwear, which has always been a very private, rather than connection, for example. The material has a multitude of meanings: displays of power, reproduction, masturbation and international appreciation. My time in men's underwear in 1940's called me back to Manila. I inspired close-to-the-body suspenders in white placed and stitched on the waistband area."

ABSOLUT | STF
underwear collection
for Lesley Mobo,
proudly Filipino

the country's cities to choose. And we're going back to minimalism because that's what happening. But young people also. I think designers should see as a marketing strategy. Designers all over the world know how to create their collections. They always manage it to their different seasons. You have the basics and luxury pieces, which still make the statement, the signature or whatever it is the men collected to tell the people, the fashionistas and the buyers, this is the new trend, this is the new collection, and then you have the show pieces.

How much of the collection becomes show pieces?

It should be about 35 percent of your collection, but with people like Lesley and Monsanto, they tend to show 80 or even 90 percent of these pieces for their shows. But these show pieces are not accessible. You can only get these by trade to museums if you're a big customer. But if you go to H&Queen, Salinas or Elsa shops, what you see are simplified versions of these ideas.

What do you think of trends and people's propensity to follow?

I think trends are very wishy. It depends on how a good a designer is and what the designer stands for. Some brands depend on which bracelet there are versus colors that would sell and certain people would buy it because there's the trend.

How does an designer who are constantly among enough that they can singlehandedly create their own trend.

Is fashion now 'basic designer-driven or consumer-driven'?

I'm really concerned about consumers and cards—what they want and need, in the moment the industry is promoted because every six months they have to create a trend. There's a trend for the sake of having a trend. So now the trend for trend's sake is the return of minimalism in design. It's a reverse reaction from the consumers to the retailer to the supplier.

How about on the retail side of the issue?

Retail wise, there's a return to globalization. The impact of having a one-on-one relationship between the customer and the brand. All these high trade buyers who promote or make the consumers feel that the clothes were made specially for them. I think you have to maintain that if you want to have the real one.

What did you do for Absolut this time?

I think they did bags before, then shirts, then now underwear. Actually the whole plan is to create a whole collection of underwear.

There were some designers who made tickets, some made trousers—I ended up doing underwear. The brief of the project is 1019, the year Absolut was founded. I had to come up with a design that is related to that year.

In terms was your design process for that particular brief, a year in history?

I limited myself to three keywords. There was a lot of movement at that decade. You have the Victorian, so my first keyword was the "corset," then the second is the "vulcanize"—because this was the movement in bed in the decade. And the third, I wanted it to be "personalized."

And then you had the iconic Absolut bottle shape?

If I look like Absolut label shape, it looks like Lesley fucking up printed pot. It's very amateur. It's like the students when you give a headline brief and they attach it with just stationery. It's very personalized. So there, that is my first show structure that I've put altogether. And as part of my strong FIL genes, they brought me here to show the collection.

Also your favorite 26 Mobo line, are you planning to keep your own line?

I enjoyed this responsibility because I'm very much motivated as an individual. When they offered and showed me what it needs for the message that they want to tell—I was like, a no-brainer, yes we want and so on.

What is your personal design philosophy?

It's about about empowerment. I will always bring in strong and rebellious undertones in my. It's like a definitive image. It's all about determination, in luxury in terms of richness and magnificent. It's really about in it now. I think we have to be determined, if we're not determined, we'll always go back to the past.

You think that's the reason why designers always make retirements in the past?

The problem in fashion is that, we don't have more time to prepare a debut couture piece. Because we only have six months to create a. Unlike for cars where you do concept every two years. It's like "Pedro playing suggests, he build racing cars at home." "Child loving director would a really hard line, it's the biggest challenge."

Where do you get inspiration?

It depends on which mother you are talking to. If to me right now, my market is London, Fashion in London still lives in the moment. I wouldn't say I would still look for inspiration in the streets.

In your whole time we go back to London what is your day like?

It's very normal—I do my job, I go to work, and then I'm not very much. As there are just a glamorous job. Most of the time I stuck beyond office hours—working until one or two a.m. You really have some dedicated.

As who point in your life, what matters you?

The fact that I like what I'm doing. To be able to make a living out of what I do is such an amazing thing. To be able to voice out and to create collections is a great source of pride. And for people to buy the collection is a great source of confidence.

incurable
ilie

islands. Today we still remember the legends told to us in our youth, such as the sleeping woman of Pinatubo, or even that we were descended from a man and woman named Malakas and Maganda who emerged from split bamboo.

Are you far sarcred?

It's for many months that led up to the First ever Philippine Graphic Fashion awards. What is happening today, by the way, I can dream in that brave, vital, natural world of dreams in the striking world. Friends, acquaintances, artists and strangers would talk to me of their story ideas drawn from their memories and fantasies. They explored their imaginations, inspired by Guimas, to create their own mixed worlds. For me, the world had already become a much more engaging place.

The greatest draw of the whole affair was the fun aspect of all this. Behind the scenes, I had developed an incredible love of inventing—the power to play I believed, I'm exploring the rich imaginations of Filipinos everywhere.

We all share similar nights as the pace several months were absolutely superb to. For it was all in the pursuit of injecting a bit of Guimas' in our lives, in order for us all to drift lower with ordinary.

The First Philippine Graphic Fashion Awards is' Art Science and Architecture will be held today at the Rockwell Tent, from 10AM to 10PM. All for free all you have to do is come.

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Love/Hate 'Ta—the whole country's fists were clenched in misery as Manny Pacquiao showed the world the strength of the Filipino spirit.

Super Heroes within our midst

LAUREN DYOGI
She is the real Big Brother, who granted the vision of Filipino voyeurs, discovering new reality stars along the way.

AMINA AHANIZ
Her creations have reached the shelves of the fashion conscious global set, while retaining their distinctively Pinoy flair.

IN A BEWILDERING ERA OF infinite options—of flavors-to and reality bites televisions, unlimited texting and international roaming, super-sized meals and low-carb diets, hungry wives and ulcer sheiks—it is the easiest thing to get lost in the orbit of the mediocre.

Some say that we (here is a generation that is content to be mediocre. Some that moment of acting up, you have young people scoffing and with anything for fear of acting badly. The 'adults' rely on time-tested formulas because they have always worked, and the kids are divided on the direction they should take. Everyone is confused. Through all the blurred lines and uncertainty, what it really is a post-modern post-millennium world that brings us to the cusp of change.

We, we have been heralding the coming years since our forefathers threw stones, and we are certain to shout it out loud: "We are Super! And we are the world is the stones!"

The day and age were we many people living within the confines of safety for here in Super! our backbone is in "Take it

Tim Yap

as the stones."

By that, we do not mean blind nation digging, brute force, or ignorance, but something a little more elegant: inspiring the "how" and the "why." Taking it to the stones means knowing yourself and knowing where you want to go, doing everything legally possible to get to that point, and if by the grace of heaven, some divine intervention, that stone gets crushed, you bring it to the next level, proving that the impossible today is getting your country centered on the global map.

For this, we believe that world is unprepared for the young. The following 5 are the pure' preachers for we dared you: Lead yourselves, of becoming new inspirations you to dream big, to think out of the box, to live for their achievements in various fields of style, urban living, pop culture, entertainment and awareness...they're all Super and they're rocking the world to the stones!

KATRINA HALILI
As a child, she was the favorite child of Philippine audiences both in fantasy and reality.

TEAM MANILA
Their Pinoy-centric design philosophy has brought Filipino lifestyle to another exciting level, giving rise to a 'Pinoy and Proud' Super! generation.

PABLO PUNSAN
His passion for his work, distinct eye for detail and great touch with fans captivate the masses and elevate him to the A-list fashion ranking.

THE RACERS
Manalo Bongarera, Dindo Pelea and Ryan Ey prove that speed is not a bad thing, if you know how to drive in the right direction.

ROCK ED
Their slogan is "We more we-we Philippines!" They're Super! in such crazy ways they are more than they speak.

RAYA MARTIN
His shot to first fame "going to the stones on the edge of the world" alone with his camera, it doesn't take worldwide recognition for one to be Super! It takes guts, eagerness and drive to do what you love—Raya has all these.

ALL STARS
They represented the Philippines in global hip hop scenes...they danced their way to global acclaim, raising the roof for Filipino performers worldwide. For us, they "take the lead!"

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Super! threesome with Johnny, Keira and Orlando

Skip the parrot and the peg leg, let these interviews keep you in that pirate-y mood

IT MAY BE, DEPENDING ON your point of view, the best or worst pirate in history, but there's no doubt that he's also the most entertaining (and most fashionable). Yes, Johnny Depp is back for another turn as Captain Jack Sparrow in the soon-to-be-released "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest," the second installment (of three) in the rollicking adventures of the dandy, rum-loving pirate and his unlikely allies.

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check the Lifestyle Section every other week for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights.

Super! threesome with Johnny, Keira and Orlando

From page 83

the idealistic Will Turner (Orlando Bloom) and feisty Elizabeth Swann (Keira Knightley).

Here are Chris Sugai's interviews with Johnny, Keira and Orlando, to keep you in that pirate-y mood.

Johnny Depp

There are still moments when Johnny Depp finds it hard to fully comprehend the phenomenal success of Pirates of the Caribbean.

"I wanted to play Captain Jack again because he's so much fun to play and there's so much more to explore," he says. "If they're going and if they want to do Pirates 4 and Pirates 5, I'm there. Why not?"

Depp promises that you'll see new layers of Captain Jack in the next two movies.

Sugai: Jack's a pirate. But does he live by any rules?

JD: I think Jack definitely has his own set of rules, his own code that he lives by and the people in real pirates did in those days. They went very seven seconds in hell. I think Jack has an awareness to himself.

Sugai: What kind of treasure will Jack get into in Dead Man's Chest?

JD: Well, he certainly has something very specific on his mind which is outside financial gain. It's more to do with a spiritual journey, in a weird way. He's looking for something extremely unique.

Sugai: It's obviously a big budget film. How do you keep hold of the character with all the interference of films making at this level?

JD: This is how naïve I am. On the first film I seemed to me we were making quite an intimate little film because as far as I'm concerned you go outdoors, you get in the meadow, you're with your director and you're slugging it out and you're making things happen. And you're doing what you are meant to do within the context, within the structure of the story. It didn't dawn on me how epic things were. In fact it didn't dawn on me until we were probably half way through shooting when I saw the first rough cut of the first trailer and I was suddenly completely shocked, like 'wow, this is enormous!' Now coming on to Dead Man's Chest and having a pretty good handle on the characters, knowing him as well as I do, it's obviously so much larger than the first. The structure, the way it's a lot more complicated to shoot. They've upped the stakes quite humbly during the second movie.

Sugai: Does it feel different, being on a Jerry Bruckheimer set?

JD: Well as I said, you, on the first one, because only it just felt very intimate to me and it got more and more grand as time went on. The cast is really utterly Jerry Bruckheimer—every thing's in, the kitchen sink, everything. And it's done with incredible taste and he sees the best guys to do it and it's impressive. As yeah, working on a Jerry Bruckheimer production is different on many degrees.

Sugai: Keira Knightley and Orlando Bloom's careers have taken off since the first Pirates. They are both big stars now. Has that changed anything?

JD: No, I think it's the same people as far as I can tell. They still come in, work hard and are properly normalised. Keira's as sweet as can be, Orlando is as sweet as can be. It's really happy that we got everybody back and everybody's in relatively the same condition as when we started the thing.

Keira Knightley

If Keira Knightley sometimes feels that she's been on the high seas, filming Pirates of the Caribbean, for a long, long time, it's easy to understand. Because she has.

Turning one year old Keira, along with the all-star line-up from the first, hugely successful Pirates film, The Curse of the Black Pearl, have reunited with director Gore Verbinski to make Pirates 2, Dead Man's Chest, not this summer, and Pirates 3, which we'll no doubt year, virtually back to back.

"It felt like the last two years had never happened and we've been working on Pirates for no, no time," she notes. Not that she's complaining. "We have got three fantastic sets, it's pretty much exactly the same crew with a couple of new people, the same cast, same director, same writers, same producers obviously, so it really is like we never finished doing the first one and we have just continued."

Sugai: How is working on Pirates 2 and 3 compared to the first film?

KK: It has been the world actually because I can't even remember whether we married. I guess we started in February and it felt like the last two years had never happened and we have been working on Pirates of the Caribbean the entire time. [laughs] But it has been great. It's a long haul, as I said, we started in February, we had about a month and a half on leave and then we are shooting until February or March [2006], so it is a big one. I have never done anything as long which makes it different, but the crew are great and it is pretty much all the same people and it's nice, it's good fun.

Sugai: Do you enjoy the time you film in the Caribbean or do you prefer being here in LA?

KK: I prefer being here in LA. We go to some very beautiful places and we go to some not so beautiful places, I think you do end up getting to feel lived and [spiritedly] if you are going to wonder y'know. They are great for a couple of weeks and you go "Oh look there's the beach, this is lovely" and then you get "OK, what else? I've done the beach, I've done the sea, I have read all my books, I can't do anything else!" But I'm not finding being in LA—I am on the prowl like this!

Sugai: You must be pleased with the critical reaction to Pirates and Pirates because it's had some great reviews?

KK: Ha! It's good, I haven't seen any of that. I believed the good stuff, I would have to believe the bad stuff as well and neither of it is very helpful for me. But that's good, that's great to know, I like it. All the experiences that I have had so far have been absolutely amazing. And it is lovely to come back on to Pirates, with a film that is already established because there's so much kind of excitement around it. But equally it is great to do things that are really complete risk and you don't know what the outcome is going to be.

Sugai: A lot has happened in your career since the first Pirates and Pride & Prejudice because it's had some great reviews?

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Sugai: A lot has happened in your career since the first Pirates and Pride & Prejudice because it's had some great reviews?

KK: Yeah, I've got a bigger mailer! [laughs]. That says a lot doesn't it.

Sugai: How do you choose a film?

KK: I don't know, it's just whatever catches my fancy. If it is a film I think I would want to see and then that's kind of a good way to judge it. And if you want the director and you like them then that's even a better way to judge it. But it just depends. I don't pick it by genre, if I read a good comedy and I go 'oh yeah, I'd really like to be a part of that . . .' but equally it would be a shame, I don't really have a plan, it's just what jumps out at me.

Sugai: What's it like acting alongside Johnny Depp and Orlando Bloom?

KK: It's amazing, I mean, they are very beautiful. [laughs] No it was very easy on the eyes. And they are really great as well, they are lovely and something Johnny much, you know it's wonderful, it's taking an acting master class, it's chalk always enjoyable. And Orlando I have known for a very long time. We used to go up for things in London together so it's really nice you know to spend time with him as well. It's my mum, which is nice.

Orlando Bloom

When he was at drama school, Orlando Bloom never quite imagined himself in action adventure movies. As he notes with a smile, it's funny how things turn out.

Along with Johnny Depp and the lovable rogues Jack Sparrow and Keira Knightley as Elizabeth Swann, the governor's daughter who falls for Will, Orlando obviously and understandably holds the first Pirates movie in high esteem.

"Oh we had a fabulous time making it," he says. "Lovely people, fantastic locations and a great director. It was one of the best professional experiences I've ever had."

And so it's easy to understand why he was keen to repeat the experience in Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest, and Pirates 3, which have been filmed, virtually back to back.

"I really enjoy doing it," he says. "I get to work with Johnny and Gore Verbinski and all these great talents. It's amazing because it's a chance for me to continue to learn my craft from some more experienced actors."

Super: How much easier are the fight scenes for you now?

OB: It's like when you start learning dialogue, it gets easier the more dialogue you have the more he it comes to learn it. The body is a muscle and the more you do you get muscle memory. There is basic parry routine that works for pretty much any sword fight and you may it, depending on what mood you are using. But yeah, it has gotten a lot easier. I used to have to rehearse for weeks and weeks in advance but now I can have like three or four routines with the stunt guys and I can pick it up much quicker which is cheesy.

Super: Is this the most exciting project you've worked on?

A: Well, I had the most ridiculous good fortune when I left drama school to work on a project like Kingdom of Heaven and then movies. That was an incredible hand out for me but Pirates really united the dead in terms of giving me opportunities to do movies like Kingdom of Heaven and Elizabethtown or this film movie told called Haven. Pirates was deadly amazing because it came from the ashes, out of left field and when that script came going round town a lot of people just passed over it because it was like a funny adventure ride. It was one of those scripts that nobody really jumped on and then we jumped on it and it was a really good script. It was exciting in that sense because it was like "Wow, who knew it would have that kind of cachet and success?"

Super: You have become such a public figure, are you still enjoying that or is it becoming a little intrusive?

OB: It's really interesting and amazing to me the sense that I don't get out of my car and walk home and get surrounded by people. It's funny because I try to keep a low profile as much as possible because that is kind of valuable and when I am in premiers or whatever then that's when people know you are going to be around and it creates that kind of excitement. It's like the circus coming to town. I have spoil this analogy before. People get so ripped say in it and I am always really grateful for the fans because like I said, I have had amazing opportunities and the election that I have worked with have humbled some pretty big movies on the basis of the fact that I do have a great support system and a movie like Kingdom, I got a shot at, you know. It's funny to me because it makes over $200 million worldwide and it is still considered not to have done as well. But it is just that Hollywood has such high expectations. It's crazy.

Super: What do you do in your free time?

OB: Free time is great but I just keep it as non-real as possible. I have dogs, I have a great family. I have good friends.

Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest is being shown in theaters nationwide.

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If Dad was a DJ

One of the world's best DJs is called Anthony Pappa, and we couldn't resist the pun

ALEXIS BORJA PRODUCER and DJ Anthony Pappa has over 200 international gigs a year. We don't know how he does it—when he's not spinning records, he's traveling...but we're thankful he does.

He's often considered one of the best DJs in the business by the kingpins of dance music. A few days ago, Manila got to see why. The usual suspects, Mowwie, brought him here for a one-night engagement at the Embassy Superclub.

Super Pappa!

Anthony's stint at Super Bar was a gig to remember. At 33, he owns the Melbourne, then the mecca of the DJ world. In Australia he played at three clubs; when he moved the UK he had to work his way up the ladder again—what he did.

Anthony established himself by playing a wide range of funky house music—from house to commercial trance. He produces on the side too.

Anthony has said in an interview with a DJ magazine, "When the needle drops, the bullshit stops. That's it, end of story period." Oh yeah, you should've seen the Miss crowd at the Embassy Superclub—there was nothing but screams for more and more.

Inquirer got to sit down with Anthony and he talked about the stress of traveling, the lot he thong Kong has been after his gig here—he travels enough so here back time Supreme style.

But there's nothing lurid other do than DJ, he says. We're glad he never tires of spreading his Super stuff.

Pepe Diokno

PAPPA AND POPE: DJ Anthony Pappa and Pepe Diokno

SCRUFF AND GUN: Michelle Punzalan loves Eric Cua

GP CRUISE: Chichi Soares and GP Reyes

LET'S MAKULIT: Jaime Bautgistas and Rina Zalamea

MOTOROLA Philippines head Pamela Arroyano, Gabby Bautgistas and Photo marketing Mia Limcaoo

TIM HO TO: Ladies and gents, this is Tim Yap

HMMM, Tina Tinio loves her shoes

WATTAZ of the World Cup finals. JM Bautgistas is here.

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Yoga to go

YOGA ADDICTS Sofia Ma. Ismael and Corey Pitts now offer yoga classes in your home or office and at your own convenience with a service they call BITOGA (My Time. My Place. My Yoga).

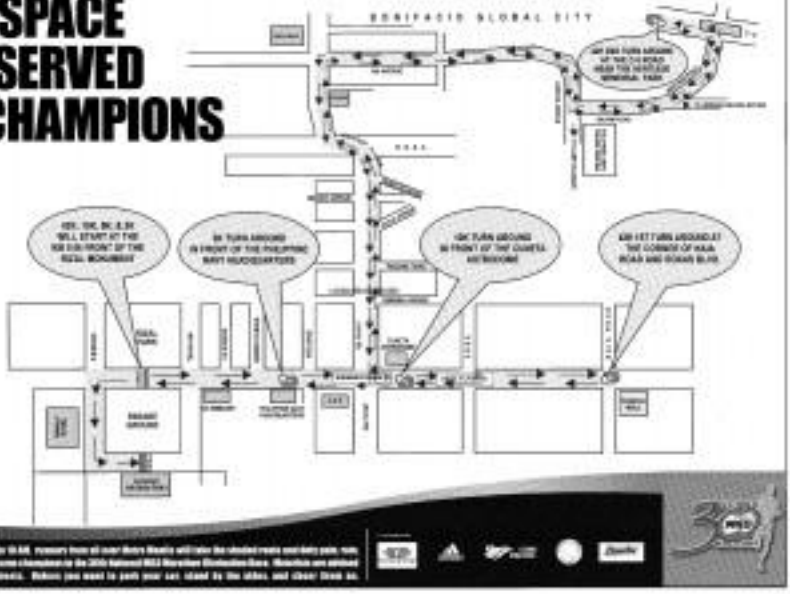
With regular practice, yoga offers greater strength, flexibility, balance, increased energy, enhanced memory and concentration, better posture, a stronger immune system and reduced stress.

Corey was introduced to Hatha Yoga at age 22 in his home in Australia under native Senegal Yoga teacher John Lenfield. Corey was certified to teach at the Integral Yoga Institute at Satchidananda Ashram in Yogaville, Virginia. Since then Corey has studied with native Tantrics and Ashtanga teachers in the Inner Himalayas and continues to train in Australia under native Senegal Yoga teacher John Lenfield. Corey was certified to teach at the Integral Yoga Institute at Satchidananda Ashram in Yogaville, Virginia. USA after completing 270 hours.

Raya started her yoga path with Jhyana or meditation when she was in college, and her Hatha Yoga asana practice soon followed. She also took the weather training at the Integral Yoga Institute at Satchidananda Ashram in Yogaville, Virginia and became the first Filipino certified as an Integral Yoga Instructor. She still trains with senior Iyengar teacher John Lenfield in the Western mountain Ashtanga Yoga and practices with Jasmin Herald of the Iyengar Yoga School of Bangkok.

Call or text 09270777825 or e-mail mysgaz@yahoo.com.

THIS SPACE IS RESERVED FOR CHAMPIONS



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Magpa-deliver na!

By Bryn Dizon

DEAR FAB FIVE,

Hey, welcome to the Philippines. Or, the rest of you, Ryan and Thom, welcome back.

I'd like to think the five of you are here for some philanthropic spree...you know, like the PWP's Work Injury. We have children who need schools, children who need clothes. We also have an abundance of trees and mountains that need saving.

Ok, no. I'm not asking you to do what the government should be doing. It's not asking you to leave. Stay here forever, in fact. This local clothes called MIM-CHN (pseudo stallion accounting TV shows franchises [mean, millions of dollars! Catch in on them before "America's Got Talent" does.) There are pressing issues above starving children and illiteracy.

Filipino-style style

Like, um, people who wear three collars up and oh, people who buy those flip-flops just because they're that brand of flip-flops.

Do you know how there are statues in the States who like to dress hip-hop like? We have them here, too. The thing is they think they rule this place, because they think they're black! I digress.

For some reason, I think Filipinos are inseparable from their jeans. But I've seen people wear jeans to the beach. And I swear I saw people at the gym wearing jeans. On the treadmill.

There is a look you'll see every day — it's the "ignore-office-worker look." It's a collared shirt (often buttoned up) or a style (often black) with black pants. You'll see these out like this even at temperatures above 37 degrees Celsius. I'm not into fashion or anything, but this makes me run away in fear. They must have a "boss commands" super power.

A stitch glitch

This is what I'm asking: You're doing mentoring-ghosts, right? I have been a travel-grant-and-critique? Come on, it'll be fun. And look, instead of thinking of personalized messages, you just put your rating of them (on a scale of one to ten)!

Oh, you know, you can give everyone who lines up to see you a jostling. You'll do that, right? Thx. Ok. Okay.

Gift certificates? No? Okay.

I'm kidding.

I hope I didn't seem like I was launching a thinly-against my fellowmen. It was a tricky – but it was well-meaning. I promise. (Evil smile.)

Style over, style off

See, I don't believe in a "Filipino" style ... you can't put a box around conformities. But I think all countries should have styles that emanate from them—fashion that comes from an urge to express, one from an urge to look like someone.

A lot of Filipinos don't have that. It's always been about looking like a certain type. Now, a lot of us follow anything we see on foreign programming. If people are gonna follow foreign fads, they might as well get them from you.

'Cause you few have always been about personal style and empowerment. (I swear I don't mean to kiss ass.)

Anyway, the whole country loves it that you're here. But just one group we had over was the Village People. You guys are a huge upgrade.

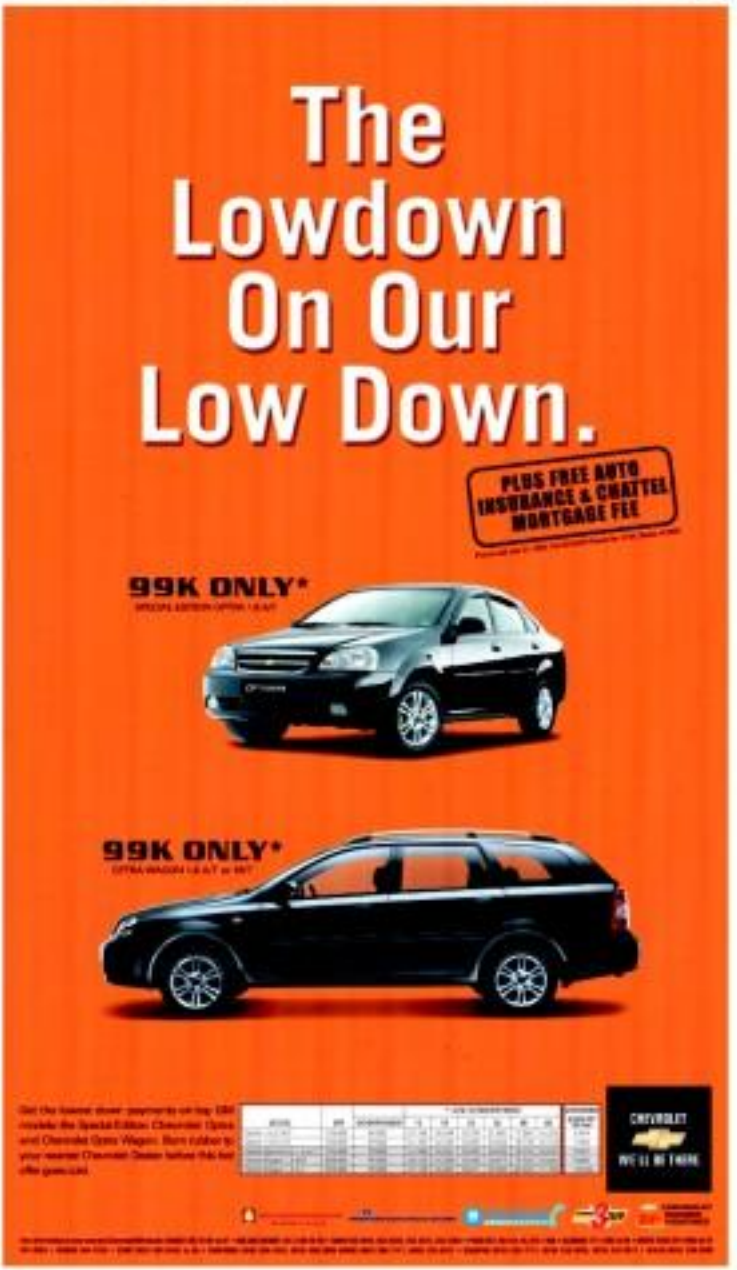
I'm not afraid to say it – I have a bunch of other straight guys who are going to go Stay Puft on you and stomp outside the Ayala Multivitamin.

Hey, thanks for reading. Come back whenever you want—I'm telling you, 600-CHN is a goldmine.

Sincerely,
Anonymous Filipino Man

Meet and greet the Fab 5 on July 20 from 7 to 8 p.m. at Greenbelt, July 21 at 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Glorietta, and on July 22 at 3:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Alabang Town Center. And I'm sure you all already watch 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" on ETC, Mondays at 9 p.m.

FROM left: Kyan Douglas, Thom Filicia, Carson Kressley, Ted Allen and Jai Rodriguez



Meee-ow!

The Pussycat Dolls are getting ready to invade Manila. Purrr purrr ...

IF YOU THINK OUR OF THOSE PEOPLE who wished your girlfriend would look like those chicks you're in for a treat.

The Pussycat Dolls are about to invade Manila.

The group was formed in the jungle-themed dinner studio of actress Christina Aguilera. After years of headlining Pussycat nights at the famous Viper Room, owned by Johnny Depp, the Dolls had enticed friends that have volunteered to dance and sing with them, giving the group the added notoriety and fan cultivation purposes.

Friends like Octavious Applegate, Jessie Nelson, Christina Aguilera, Carmen Electra, Brittany Murphy, Charlize Theron, Pamela Anderson, Jessica Sanderson.

The Pussycat Dolls have undergone many line-up changes over the years, but the six beautiful ladies that comprise the group today is the group's strongest line-up yet. The current dolls are Jessica Sutta, one-time cagebird of the Miami Heat dance troupe; Carmit Bachar, the sultry "Lola Love" girl on Kitty Hunter's world tour; two of Hollywood's most talented young dancers, Ashley Roberts and Kimberly Wyatt; the talented singer they found in an open audition, Melody Thornton; and Blonde Bombshell, a Rowan from Guiffith Spitzer, Staff Sergeant Beauty who scored a Top 20 album and single with her former girl group, Eden's Crush.

The Pussycat Dolls live in Manila exclusively from their group will be here to join from the Dolls many Filipino fans, and friends because it really pushed with their upcoming Web, saying she'd be thrilled to come over since "we've never people than Manila before and."

The Pussycat Dolls will be joined by Rizza some members from and for the show of members have Filipino heritage meaning in their veins—enhanced their singer from Manila video everyone will remember from Antoinette Heidi Jackson to Mindy Rivera, a finalist in the Canadian Idol 2005 edition and Hooters, a songwriter/singer/producer of Creole and Filipino descent.

Expect The Pussycat Dolls to rock Araneta Coliseum on July 25 as they perform their hit singles "Don't Cha," "Stick 'em U" and "Beep."

For tickets, call Ticketnet at 911 5555. Ticket prices are P2,750++, P1,200++, P1,000++, P1,650++, P800++ and P800++.

At, Rem and Fernand
Have you Seen This

THREE SEEN. A COMMON THEME FOR photography. One big exhibit. Hear the men behind the photographs of Seen This!, a photo exhibit that runs at The Cruciblo Gallery this month.

At Mactabengan

At Mactabengan was trained as a painter at the University of Santo Tomas but never used less traditional forms of expression have always appealed to him. His art puts focus on the human form and spirit. He was introduced to photography in 1997 after he took up cinematography at Mowelfund Film Institute. His photographs have been exhibited locally and internationally. In 2004, he participated in two international exhibitions. Seni Singapore! Art and the Cosmopolitan at the Singapore Art Museum (where he showcased portraits of interracial families from his project Chemistry Students) and Artspeaks: A survey of artist-run spaces, an exhibition in New Zealand (where he presented portraits of different "Men in Uniform" in the Philippines).

Since he is a Filipino who lived in Italy for 18 years, he also became interested in the idea of presenting "cultural exchange" between the Philippines and Italy through photography.

In Manila, he had a solo exhibition entitled, "What the Hell is Lomo?," presenting 100 images of Dalton Ma. In Italy, he had a solo exhibition entitled "Tat Tat" showing Filipino life in 200 snapshots. Both exhibitions were shot using a Lomo camera. Together with his wife—Kalya Guerrero, they co-published the Lomographic Society in the Philippines.

Ren Zamora

Ren Zamora, 33, received his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and accountancy from the University of the Philippines in 1991. After passing the CPA board, he went to work in the corporate world. But after ten years, he decided to leave the monotony, overworked, and underpaid world of Philippine corporations.

He then began photojournalism, learned from his work with the illustrious student publication The Philippine Collegian. In 2003, he started as a photo correspondent of the Manila Times and later moved to the Philippine Daily Inquirer in 2004. His photos have gained numerous front pages of PDI. His photograph of a child rescued after surviving sirens days under a collapsed building in Infanta, Quezon during

(FROM left) Ito Macatangay, Ren Zamora and Fernando Zialcita, the men behind the photographs

PHOTOS by Ren Zamora

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

lo want to know: s?

a heavy typhoon named Glenn Rest Gawa Pha. to hit 2005 in the Louis B. Pilotin Awards, which aims to recognize the works of reporters and photographers working for PDI.

Zamora made his breakthrough and country proud when he won the Gold Prize for the General News Category in the Best Asian Photo Contest last June. His photo of Gozo-nuegne children grieving fill toddlers during a rescue operation bested 20,000 entries from more than 300 photographers all over the world.

Today he continues to cover news events for the beacons and hopes to continuously expand his guidance from the senior photo-reporters so that he will be ready to take the shoes every now and then between Manila and his hometown Cavite to visit his family and nine dogs.

Fernando Encora

Fernando Encora received his Bachelor in Fine Arts Degree Major in Painting from the University of the Philippines, Diliman in 1999. He has been an active artist for almost ten years now and has done a series of one-person exhibits and group shows here and abroad.

In 1995, he was an art teacher at the Philippine High School for the Arts, a workshop teacher on book illustration in 2002 and of basic drawing in 2003 at the Ayala Museum.

He is also responsible for the illustrations of the children's book by the former Miss Asia pacific Michelle Van Dieseth entitled "Butterfly" which was launched in 2003. He sometimes illustrates for local magazines.

His recent exhibit in Alliance Francaise last February entitled "Naked Series" featured his works of charcoal, ink wash and acrylic on each piece.

For this group exhibit, he chose to focus on still life, common images, landmarks and spaces in the Philippines.

The exhibit runs until July 23 at The Crucible Gallery, 4th 6th Floor Building B of GM Megamall. For inquiries, call 635-6481.

FELLOW DREAMERS! HERE'S THE SCHEDULE FOR UNMASKED

THE FIRST PHILIPPINE GRAPHIC Fiction Awards brought to you by the lifelong partnership of Neil Gaiman and Dolly Parden!

10 a.m.: Come to the exhibit space!

2 p.m.-4 p.m.: Artist Emmanuel Qhel Arnam with local comics artists:

Alfredo Alcala Jr.
Carey Alampihan
Ani Mercado Bolarin
Wilson Ferreras

4:15 p.m.-5 p.m.: Power of Prose: A reading of excerpts from the best fiction stories featuring the voices of:

Dean Alfar, eight-time Palanca Award winner and renowned playwright

Ana de Leon, lead singer and guitarist of Imago

Ramona Diaz, Sundance Award winning filmmaker of "Imelda"

Karen Ramoneda, writer, editor, "LOST" buyer and lifelong environmental debunny Depp

Iya Rivera, host of Digital Beat

Zeus de la Paz, Expo! columnist, Preview lifestyle editor at large

Pinoy Sarmiento, lead singer of The Late Isabel

5:15 p.m.-8 p.m.: Dance Live

Real time, on-the-spot comics creation and materials by Wilson Tortosa

6:30 p.m.-7 p.m.: Guest Stage performance

Awarding Ceremonies

7:15 p.m.: Opening number by Philgraphic and live performances by Planet Ejay

8 p.m.: Awarding of the winners of the genre category

8:30 p.m.: Awarding of the People's Choice Awards and the Most Creative Mask

9 p.m.: Awarding of the winners of the comics category

Get a Super! job!

DID YOU JUST GET OUT OF SCHOOL AND ARE you ready to take the plunge into the working world? Or you find yourself twiddling your thumbs in the office (or playing solitaire or chatting), waiting for 5 p.m. so you can make your quick getaway? Do you feel that you are a potential hot commodity in your company? Are you stuck with school-related?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, there's no doubt about it—you need a new job.

Whether you're looking for a career change or a job jumpstart, head over the Success Job Market Employment Expo from July 17 to 19 at the Glorietta activity area.

The job fair, which is brought to you by The Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network, brings together over a hundred participating companies all waiting for their job vacancies to be filled by qualified applicants—that means you.

Update your resume, put on your smart clothes, get your game face on and get ready to shine at on-the-spot screenings.

Go ahead, get a job!

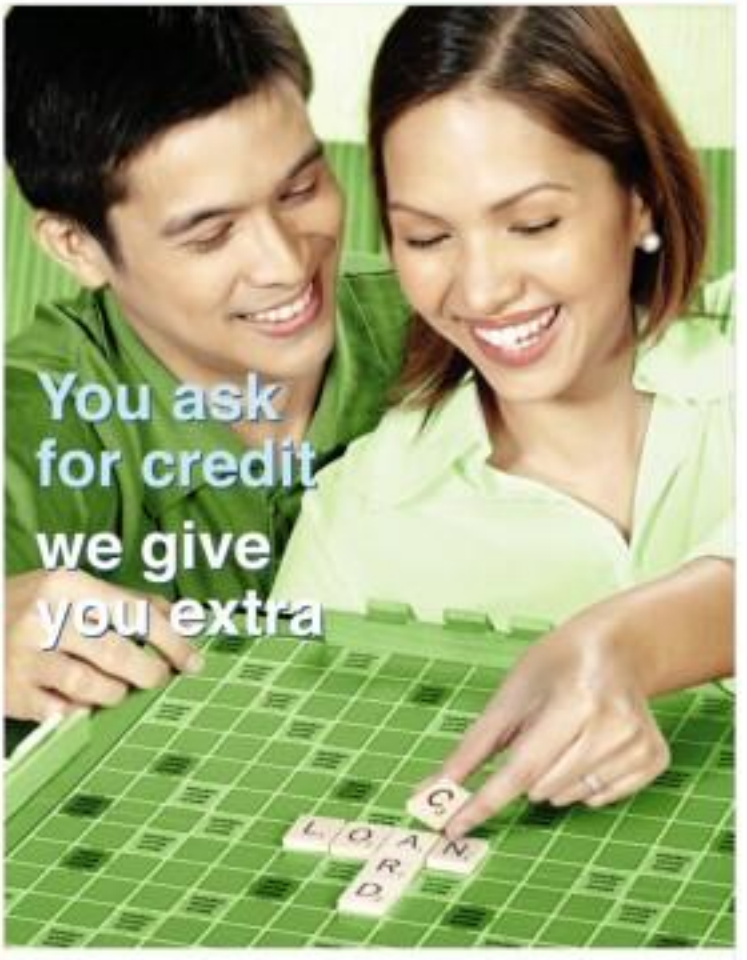
Success Job Market Employment Expo 2006 is scheduled to be brought to you by Advantage Online, CITI HOME, ASM, ATC Lenovo, Glorietta, Ayala Malls, Figaro Coffee Company, Wave 89.1 and Jam 88.3. To register, check out the Success Job Market or visit www.jobmarketonline.com. Job Market is the Inquirer's recruitment section published every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Got music?

Get ready, music lovers. Eastwood and Super are tying up for a Super Music Festival

August will be a fun month for music fans. Super and Eastwood will be holding a month-long music festival that would feature some of the country's top talents.

Continue reading Super for more info.



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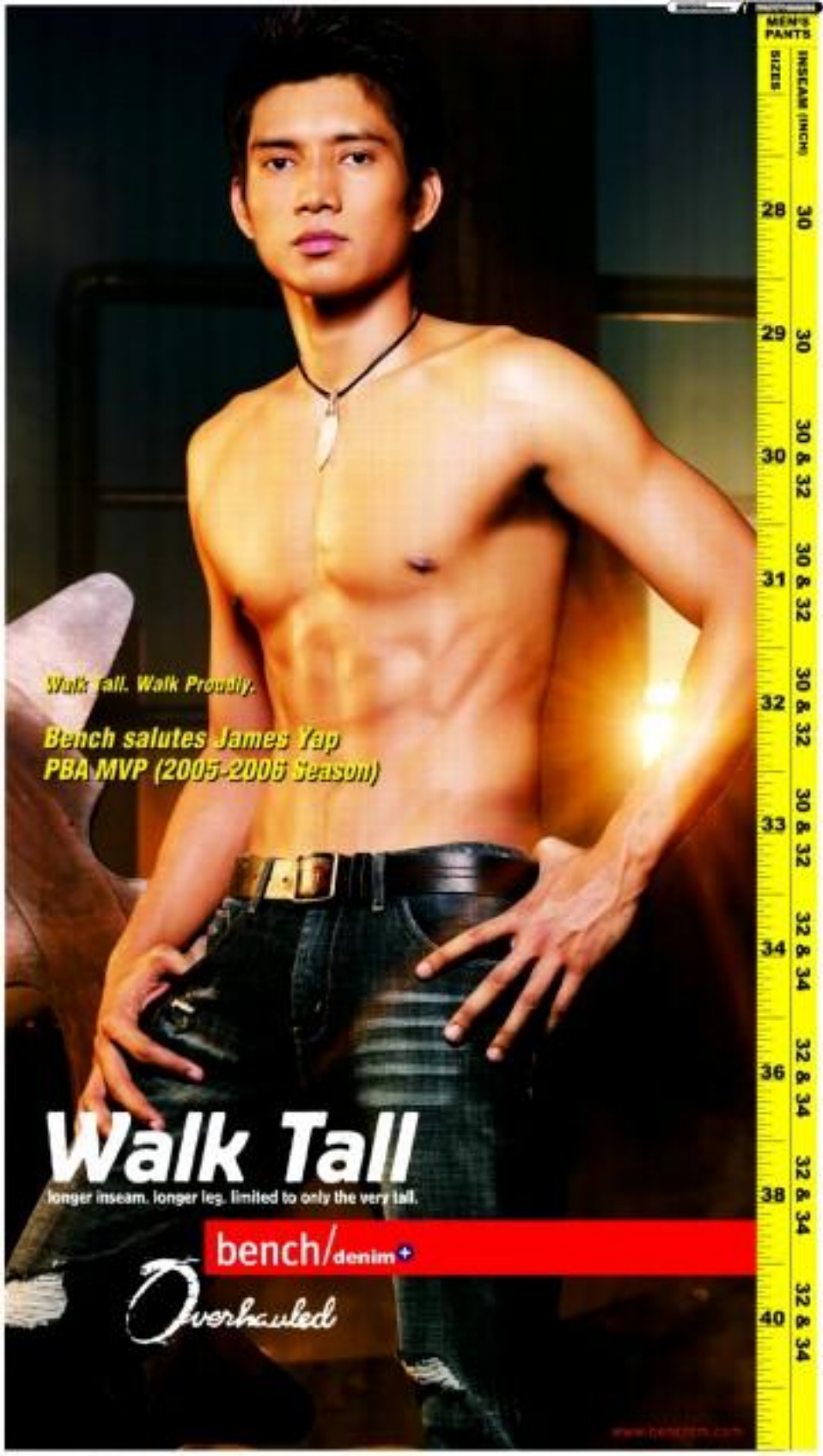
MEN'S PANTS
SIZES
INSEAM (INCH)
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Walk Tall. Walk Proudly.
Bench salutes James Yap
PBA MVP (2005-2006 Season)
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longer inseam. longer leg. limited to only the very tall.
bench/denim+
Overhauled

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5

urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Let the rude times roll?

According to an undercover Reader's Digest global test, common courtesy is apparently nonexistent in Manila. Hmmm...

IT WAS SOMEhow meant to happen.

I stood in line at a bookstore in Megamall, waiting to finally go for a baby book, even I'd been distracting. I expected to check out in a jiffy but I didn't, which left me slightly outraged. Am, instead of punching up some numbers on the register and hugging my purchase to mine, the cashier—of the two ladies role-playing there—moved very slowly and mechanically, hugging the books on the counter when

Age against the machine

Gina de la Paz

they weren't busy texting on their cell phones. It was definitely the epitome of customer service... or not. (I won't name names, but the place drowns with Thermoflasks. I'm sorry shopping there again. Sho.)

So I dumped the rackers and

LET THE RUDE O

FOOTBOT BY BILLAMENDO

A. LIPIN BY JOEL ARIDEN

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY PH JUNIOR

NUTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

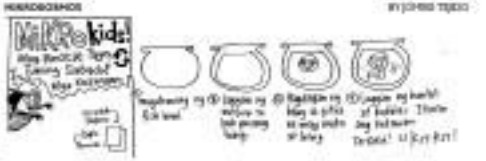
LOVEHUNTS BY ELIZABETH CHORNEJO

ATOMO AND WEBBY BY LINA GARCELLANO

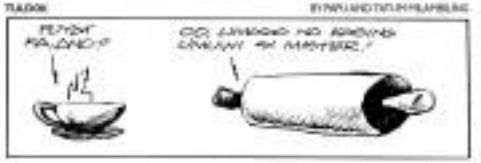
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PANILAYAN

RIKO MACHINE BY MARK ARIDEN

HOROSCOPES BY JOHNS TEJERO

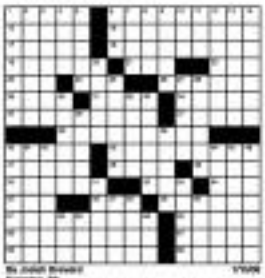


TULOSOK BY PAPA LAND TATUM PHILIPPINES INC.



BBH BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Debt dodger
6 Applicant to
10 Unfriendly
11 Funny Cat bad
12 Ice cream
13 Singer Vickie
14 Bit of this
15 Singer Vickie
16 Mr. Thomas
17 "A Mandela's
19 Compass dir.
20 __ Dr. (SFO)
21 Reserve
23 Very good sign
24 Fishing cord
25 Coupled any
27 Lifted
29 "Look down" co
30 Ice
40 Chautauqua
41 Cookbook title
42 Of an oven temp
43 Dynamic, rapid?
44 Southern sugar
45 Be appropriate
for
47 Script on TV
48 Basic goal
49 Part of a vac.
50 Tyrannic
narcissist
51 Wilder Molly
52 Lollygag
53 Feet of MTO
54 Speech of
"Lincoln's Land"
57 Parade's
58 Meticulous
attorney
59 "Golden Fleece"
owner

DOWN
1 Workers' strict
grip
2 Fearsome fish
3 Wrongdoer's
4 Grey or Mercer
5 Pentamerous
component
6 __ the wiser
and nothing
richer
7 Part of DAT

8 Roman
sovereign
9 "Compulsion"
thriller
10 MAKE
companion
11 Picks
12 Of pitches
13 Religious
recluse
14 Added bubbles
to
15 Be astonished
18 Archimedes'
cry from the
bathtub
22 Temporary
currency
26 Pat on a free
cloth
28 Continue at
"Oklahoma!"
32 "Moonlight's first
name
33 Stick, last
34 A __ comes
35 Soap opera
40 Settle roses
41 Tropicbird
aerial display
43 The presence of
something
44 Rose engraver
45 Lido goer
46 Nickel mine
worker, home
51 __ Clan
53 Mongolian
tents
55 "Hamlet" Lamb
"O'Actor" star
56 "Home" star
Burns
60 Vienna
62 Benevolent
63 Table scrap
64 Cold, Dead
snake

Solution Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		6	4					
	2			1			9	
		4	8			3		1
						7		6
	1						8	
8		7						
6		8			3	5		
	5			2			1	
					7	6		

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	9	5	2	1	4	3	8	7
8	3	2	5	6	7	1	9	4
7	4	1	8	9	3	2	4	5
9	1	7	6	2	8	5	3	4
3	2	4	7	5	9	6	8	1
5	6	8	4	3	1	7	2	9
4	5	9	1	8	2	4	7	3
1	7	3	9	4	6	8	5	2
2	8	6	3	7	5	9	1	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Let the rude times roll?

From page G1

chilled my eyes away from their pedestrian gaze, I spotted a stack of Reader's Digests at the far end of the stand. Call it a cosmic coincidence or whatever—I mean, Reader's Digest isn't exactly cool and cool's—but the headline read: "How Often Are We?" In blinks: a quote from Stanley Dietz's best bud Shaggy, "Like, zoike!"

Undercover brothers

A quick Google search revealed that the article was a "unique one to see how helpful and polite people are around the world." The Reader's Digest editors sent undercover researchers—both men and women—in 35 countries to conduct three tests on citizens of their biggest cities. They walked into public buildings to see if people would hold the door open, bought small items and recorded whether the sales assistants said thank you, and dropped pricked bills of paper to see if anyone would help pick them up. All were done 10 times in as many busy locations.

Explaining the fairly unusual methods, the report went on to say this: "To allow us to compare cities, we awarded one point for each positive outcome and nothing for a negative one, giving each city a maximum score of 10." The editors admitted they "did not attempt a strict scientific survey" and instead set off to conduct "the world's biggest real-life test of courteous customs, with more than 2,000 tests of actual behavior."

And how did they rate Manila's manners? Simply put, it was gaudy.

Disturbing behavior

Out of 35 participating cities, Manila ranked 32nd in terms of politeness, same as Helsinki, Finland, which racked up 46 points. The top three were New York, Zurich, and Toronto. Mumbai, India was deemed the rudest place, finishing dead last with only 12 points. Oddly enough, Asia was the region that most consistently lacked manners: Eight out of nine cities there finished in the bottom 11, "underscoring the investigation."

New York's prime spot on the list has already raised not a few eyebrows, scorching the entire actually anticipated. Reader Hayon Ed Rich reacted to the results by citing the efforts of the 2001 terrorist attacks. He pointed out, "After 9/11, New Yorkers [have become] more caring. They understand the sheer turn of life."

That said, what the eff happened—or better yet, didn't happen—in Manila?

Pinoy big brother

After the supposed nut, Reader's Digest publicist in Manila let a respondent from the project. "How can we measure someone's value simply by whether they hold a door open?" questioned a 19-year-old student named John Christopher Padilla. My answer: because different cultures should be at basic in all civilized human beings as breathing.

I've lived in or been to several countries across the globe already. And every time I come into contact with new people, I try to adopt their positive characteristics and bring them wherever I may go next. In the US and Canada, for example, I got to used to calm attendants, wait staff, and complete strangers—even those, some of whom were our privately eloquent—initiating small talk as it was a "Hi, how's it going?" (Not to me to the Pinoy name "Joel" here, as the study showed, in New York City.)

In cities dotting Latin America, Western Europe, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, I was amazed at how polite most of the locals were, greeting me with a friendly nod or even adding "per favore" and "grazie" as they would in their native tongues. It may be trivial but it reveals a lot about how citizens they are.

Meanwhile, I always get disappointed when I try the international rude guy approach in Manila—i.e., pursing my lips, walking, always saying "Please" and "thank you," letting people go ahead in line, and yes, even holding doors open for others—because all I get in return are antagonistic dagger looks. Why do Manila people always feel that somebody's out to get them?

Beyond holding doors open

The same inquiry quoted Charles Madoy, editor at British etiquette publisher Debrett's, who explained the seeming lack of graciousness in industrialized areas: "Wealthier cities aren't generally as crowded, and competition for resources is less intense." True, eh?

In fact, when asked to rationalize his bad behavior, a 31-year-old sales assistant in Mumbai unapologetically told a Reader's Digest correspondent, "I am not an educated guy. I have good sense to the customers, and that's it."

In more cases, it seems that educational attainment is proportional to etiquette, which is related to self-discipline. Stepping into discussion back to Manila, the lack of education could explain why, for instance, no one follows traffic regulations. Or why crimes by department store saddens bulk at the sight of a P500 bill before demanding for something smaller. Or why Filipino managers rarely consolidate their seatbelts while the fasten seat belt sign to ensure the plane is still taxiing. Or why it's all calabaw, ambon, and pabilisan, which is sad.

Something to smile about

In contrast from the pessimists, it's awesome to note that British think tank New Economics Foundation (NEF) has recently ranked the Philippines 17th in the Happy Planet Index. This study "measures quality of life against environmental impact" and "ranks countries by the economy based on absolute basics: what we put in and what comes out," according to reports from AFP and Reuters.

This time, Asian nations did better, with Vietnam placing highest at No. 12, followed by Sri Lanka (21) and the Philippines (17). Interestingly enough, some of the 10 nations that scored well in the Reader's Digest politeness survey didn't make it to the top 30 of the Happy Planet Index. Canada was 111th and the United States was number 150. Hmmmm...

The dissimilar findings of both studies should offer substantial insight on our behavior as Pinoys. Pulling out last idea from the global courtesy test, "Lynne Dyne, in her international bestseller 'Talk to the Hand,' claims that we live in an age of 'lazy moral relativism combined with aggressive verbal tradeoff' where common courtesies are 'practically extinct.'" Being polite—or even being happy—isn't something we aim for because a couple of surveys said we should. Or so...Rather, being courteous is important because, plain and simple, it's the right thing to do.

NDC'S CEO Mario Buenaventura and Ana Cayabyab

NDC's CEO Frank Lanner with Freddie Garcia and Ray Espinosa

Froth Of July parties like its the nineties

SJG Barbaran, Lloyd Marova and Lee Catalog

NDC's Ric Romero and Jeri Cayco

NDC's Carlo Ocampo and wife Antoinette

PARTY LIKE IT'S 1999!

Here's the 411: SLJ Jury, along with Gift Ice, Mercedes, Sonia, Hope and the New Talents with Trellanes, recently threw a pilot Fourth of July shindig at the NDC Trust Township hosted back to the 1990s during Joey's annual Fourth of July. The state of the members party: Mercedes, Ranjan Jones, Ice Mercado, Pete Magic, Jin Original Jamaican Patties Shop, Jack's, Jill's, Tess Dorcena, Jack Daniels, Algonquin's, Marova, Zapa and Sabi H'Dapper Restaurant made attendees are fireworks by serving up an absolutely delicious—you can spread that on bulletproof—Joey barbecue could possibly do without. Reading the invisible guitt-years the memorable giveaways and prizes from Cinemp, Picture Card, the Manila Bulletin, Metro Magazine, the Philippine Star, and Time Depot and Staples. And as if these were not enough, Joey decided to take things up a notch, turning the night into a real celebration by giving out a couple of tickets to the Eilal. One guest lulled the party—in classic emotion speak—as "the bomb." Well said.

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Keep on Spinning

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenco-Dario

FOR THE PLEASURE-SEEKING PARTY-goer/drug, it's easy to get sucked into the lonely void of the after-hours scene. Apart from staying up till the wee hours of the morning watching the recently concluded FIFA World Cup final (Viva Italia!) imbibing Zidane's infamous Materesco headbutt, wrestling with quarter life crisis questions and the occasional mid-day cravats at the office, their days and nights are driven by a relentless pursuit of fun and reckless adventures.

But for 25-year-old Benjo Marquez, one of our town's trailblazing and most promising young DJs, life in the past few months has been a courageous battle with the Big C. Since being diagnosed with Stage 2 Hodgkin's Lymphoma (cancer of the lymph nodes) last May, supportive friends have organized a series of fundraising parties to help shoulder the costly expenses for his chemotherapy sessions and subsequent medical treatments.

Following in the footsteps of Lucy's "Keep on Spinning" party and the "Smoking Hodgkins" concerts at Shakespeare and Xposures, comes "Remission is Possible: A Benefit for Benjo Marquez."

On Thursday, July 20, you and all our circle of DJs—Ernest, Edwin, Gwen Sun, Marvin Cruz, Dinggay Lozada, Rosario Mejia, Che Gonzaga, Alan Miranda, Raji Mata, and Mario Garcia—as they cook up a skinny rumble at the Embassy Supa Club in support of a friend and fellow homeboli. The proceeds will also serve to support Cotswolf Community (cotswoldcommunity.org), a nonprofit foundation for cancer-stricken Filipinos.

Another fundraiser gig in the works is a Charlie Pelaw Tournament slated for August 12 at the Casino Filipino. For a minimal fee, at the of P1,000, players will be treated to free-flowing food and drinks, as well as a chance to win a brand new poker table and/or a weapon-size replica of Rambo's Rhino in Call 911? 8298837.

Other Super! 24/7 events:

July 15, Saturday

Bella san: The Sound of San Francisco De Angelo and Anthony Dub, Eagle@Area Comics, Greyhounds & Happy Hours at Sugata; El Tiki Groove; R&B Night at Qt; Breakfast at Mike's Bar; Men's Session: Stranger' Back the Bounce w/ DJ Mario Garcia at 4Bar; Soho Night at Bistro Beatrix Grill; Hotties Unlocked at Mezzo; Compression Night at Magnet Cafe; The Weekender w/ Dis Cao Quiapo, Derek Mandel & Mario Garcia at MU; Soundproof DJs at Embassy Cubicles; Fifteen Bees at Government; Soulclub w/ Prince of Jaipur; Showtime Saturdays at Bed; Avalon One Stand at Intramuros Stranger La Playa; Sin Tributo at Conspiracy Cafe

July 16, Sunday

The Virgin Lobster at CCP; Champagne Lunch at Pinto Uno (Mandarin Oriental); Champagne Brunch at Spices (Hotel Phil. Plaza); The Laugh On Palette's live exhibit at SIT Dragon Mansion; Architecture + Biology exhibit at Goethe Institut Manila

July 17, Monday

Cinemalaya Films Festival opening at CCP; Movies at Magnet Cafe; #tatsMPhotoFriend at Mandala; Hello Beautiful Night at Illustrado's Jean's Libs; Manhunt w/ DJ Bo at Gerilla Makati; Silk & Steel at Malt's; Power drills at The Tavili; Bradley Fuentebo at Conspiracy Cafe; Follies de Mendi at Club Mendi

July 18, Tuesday

Lifetime Boredom w/ DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy Cubicles; Bargain Tuesdays at Embassy Cubicles; Bargain Tuesdays at Mandala; DJ Club Casanova at Café Havana Greenbelt; Lights Down to see (the Square); Phobia's Night at Conspiracy Cafe; Spirit of 87 at Cagayan's Bar

July 19, Wednesday

Weekend Wednesdays w/ DJ Bryan Almonte at Sweeney's; Smooth Wednesdays w/ Steve Mills at Abaca'ds; Throwback at Illusion; Rich Hotel 39 & Ice Glamping at Embassy Cubicles; Soy & Steel at Malt's; Power drills at The Tavili; Bradley Fuentebo at Conspiracy Cafe; Jazz Night at Bleu 167 CAC; Rockin' Revival at Cagayan's Bar

July 20, Thursday

Benefactor & Possible: Benjo Marquez Benefit w/ DJs Mario Garcia, Erwin Echolin, Ernest Sun, Marvin Cruz, Dinggay Lozada, Roman Mejia, Che Gonzaga, Alan Miranda, & Raji Mata at Embassy Club; Gang or Flyswatter Night at Malvarosa Grill; Tuesday' Stagger w/ Bowanesa Revival at Conspiracy Cafe; BBC's DJ Mike Tanamores at Bake Lab; Boogaloo at Magnet Cafe; Gotta Have Rome? at Cagayan's Bistro Bond w/ Ed Elias at Mezzo; Bobbette Bistro pill, & Chicnet at Dagupan; Legend Night at Qt bar; A Lounge at Mezzo; Latino Thursdays at Prince of Jaipur; Fiesta at Abaca'ds; Sagrabeat Gt Thursdays at Bed; Blessed Sabb at double

July 21, Friday

Fridays at Edge at Center Filipino; Breakdance w/ Bryan Almonte at 3Fly; The Ambassadors, Rampanoni, Angels, Nevada, Lyonnaise, Rhea, & Typhoon at Dagupan; Get Wasted at Mezzo; Tribo always Fridays at Malvarosa; The Blue Room w/ DJs JP Escalona & Ria Perena at Antonio Jacobs Suites; Jazz night at Conspiracy Cafe; Style Fridays at Bleu 167; Mills at Cubicles; DJ Ernesto Sun at Embassy Club; Disco Mania at MOC Greenhills; Bizarre Night at Bistro MAKATI98 at 98 Cafe; Soul Mates w/ DJ Mario Garcia at Embassy Cubicles; DJ Bar at Government; Joe Pelayo at Escape; The Ambush '70s Bistro, Dagupan Bistro at Bed; Tabi Sa Sacramento & Shoes at Prince of Jaipur; Jazzified Outings at Antonio Jacobs Hotel; La Playa

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information and a complete listing of events, text 24/7 through your mobile phone and send to 2668 (Globe) and 309 (Smart). Log on to mag24-7.com or find us on your page of 24/7 Entertainment Magazine at www.mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com.

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